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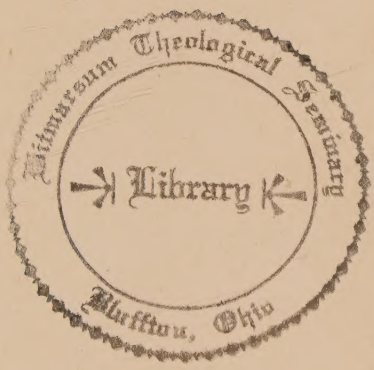

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HANDBOOKS OF ETHICS AND RELIGION

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PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

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PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

A Handbook of Christian Ethics

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH
Professor of Christian Theology in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago

WITHDRAWN

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PREFACE

Two factors of great importance for ethics have entered into the practical thinking of men today. These are the growing familiarity with experimental methods of studying human behavior and the growing prevalence of the historical method of interpreting Christianity. Until recently, treatises on ethics have usually been based on philosophical theories. Modern ethical inquiries are making increasing use of empirical surveys. Students are thus being trained to determine questions of right and wrong by analyzing the situation before them and attempting to trace the consequences of any proposed action.

The present volume is intended to help students apply in the realm of Christian conduct the same method which is becoming current in our social life today. Christianity is a historical religion, and has been constantly developing in relation to the economic, political, and other social movements of the Western World. Christian ethics has always been concerned with adjustment to actual conditions. In our day maladjustments are peculiarly acute. The discussion in the following pages is intended to exhibit Christianity as a historically developing movement, and to indicate some of the chief questions arising today which challenge Christian idealism. It is hoped that suggestions may have been made which will enable Christian students to correlate their religious ideals with the moral tasks disclosed by scientific analysis in such fashion as to make modern Christianity at the same time an outgrowth of the past and a development into the future.

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CHAPTER I

THE PLACE OF ETHICS IN HUMAN LIFE

The quest for the good.—One of our chief aims is to incorporate "good" things into our scheme of living, and to eliminate "bad" things. We are at great pains to secure "good" food, "good" clothes, "good" houses in which to live, "good" positions in which to work, "good" schools, "good" government, and the like. Probably very few people, if challenged to define just what is meant by goodness in each case, would be able to give a clear statement other than a confession of personal satisfaction. But no one would doubt the desirability of promoting the good, even if it were not entirely clear what this involved. This fundamental fact of human preferences and satisfactions antedates theorizing concerning the nature of the good. All systems of ethics must in the last analysis be tested by their capacity to enlighten men as to the things which will bring lasting satisfaction.

The conception of the "highest good."—Everyone wants what is good; but men are often mistaken in their judgments as to what is really good. The thing which makes an immediate appeal to the senses is likely to *seem* for the time being supremely desirable. But we frequently learn to our regret that impulsive indulgence brings evils in its train. Every act has to be judged, not only in the light of its immediate appeal, but also in the light of its consequences. In the quest for the "good," therefore, we are inevitably led to make comparisons. We balance present satisfaction against

ultimate consequences; we try to estimate the relative values of competing opportunities; we compare personal preferences with what others think and say; and on the basis of such reflection we attempt to decide which is the "highest good." When the entire scope of human life has been covered in such a way as to give to various possibilities their appropriate valuation, we have a philosophy of the good to which we may refer for guidance. Such a philosophy is ethics.

Moral obligation.—In the case of a conflict between desirable things we attempt to determine the good which we shall "always" be glad that we selected. *Moral* good is something which we feel obligated to seek even when our momentary impulses pull us in a contrary direction. Moral behavior is thus often in defiance of what seems at the time to be the "natural" way in which to act. It means the constant quest of the "highest good." A moral judgment aims to declare what will "always" be approved.

The good of others.—One important source of satisfaction is the good opinion of others. Our conduct must have regard to the welfare of others as well as to our personal preferences. Inasmuch as it is "natural" for us to think of the world in which we live in terms of our own personal valuations, we usually have to be trained to consider the rights and the privileges of others where these do not coincide with our own interests. At the same time, it should not be supposed that the individual with his own circle of goods stands inevitably opposed to the good of others. The entire education of the individual consists in learning to share with humanity the good things of life. It is really as "natural" to be thoughtful of others as it is to be solicitous

for one's own happiness. Often the two interests coincide. But when they do not, the welfare of others must be considered as well as one's personal preference.

The authority of conventionally accepted codes.—If the task of discovering and comparing values had to be undertaken *de novo* by each individual or by each generation, it would be appalling in its complexity and immensity. But mankind has always been engaged in this task. During countless generations men have been learning and formulating the fundamental principles which must guide one in the quest for the "highest good." These principles come to be formulated in the maxims and precepts which parents teach to their children, and which social opinion maintains in the processes of education. Every child is born into a society where right and wrong are already defined. He is taught to respect what the social group regards as right. He is punished if he transgresses. So complete is this control that the child normally thinks of moral laws as definite, inevitable rules belonging to the very structure of the world. Each generation is thus enabled to start with the accumulated experience of the race.

The limitations of formal ethical systems.—When moral ideals are definitely expressed in a particular code, they tend to remain static. The original reason for approving a way of behavior may be entirely forgotten in the course of a few generations, and the code may be set up as a moral end in itself. If the moral precepts remain unchanged, while the conditions of life change, the time may come when the code no longer represents the highest good under the changed circumstances.

To continue to impose an antiquated code on each new generation, under changed circumstances, may mean the defeat of morality. Customs like the blood-feuds which cause such pitiable distress in primitive communities are continued in defiance of finer sentiments just because each new generation is taught to reverence the "folkways" of the group, and adverse criticism of these habits is considered wrong. The correction of imperfect or perverted moral customs is often very difficult whenever strong sentiment reinforces a traditional code.

Moral living as a creative task.—There is no short and easy way of discovering the content of morality. While we may be grateful for the large number of positive principles which have been tested in the history of the race, we must also recognize that the relationships of men with their environment and with one another are so complex that the morally earnest man can never excuse himself from further critical inquiry as to the "highest good." The example of Jesus should be taken to heart by every Christian in this respect. He was constantly criticizing the shortcomings of those who fancied that they had already attained perfection. He always brought into the foreground the spiritual welfare of the particular persons with whom he was dealing, insisting that formal rules and principles must either serve humanity or be modified. Even the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. A regard for the spirit of Jesus will lead us to formulate the principles of morality in such a way that the earnest quest for the highest good may never be abated. The ethical life is one of inquiry as well as one of obedience to formal principles.

How religion reinforces ethics.—Strictly speaking, theoretical ethics is concerned solely with the discovery and the realization of the highest good in human life. It is assumed that when the good is actually known, its very goodness leads men to seek it. But in practical life men are swayed far less by carefully reasoned out conclusions than they are by sentiment and loyalty. Consequently, we find that the common sense of the race has expressed moral ideals for the most part in the form of emotion-producing attitudes or programs. Such ideals as justice, honor, purity, patriotism, generosity, evoke a sentiment of holy awe. We feel that the man who devotes himself sincerely to these ideals has spiritual contact with an unseen world. Almost inevitably profound moral convictions take on a religious interpretation.

Religion is a concern for right relations with the cosmic power on which we are dependent. It means the desire to "get right with God." It is true that sometimes a conception of God is so devoid of morality that men seek their salvation by rites and ceremonies which have little or nothing to do with morals. But religious thought at its best affirms that God cares supremely for moral conduct. When, as is the case in Christianity, God is defined as loving and holy, religion must inevitably stress love and holiness in man as the most important things. Thus in Christianity, religious experience furnishes spiritual power for right living.

The Christian conception of ethics.—Christian ethics, like any system of ethics, seeks to define the highest good, and to indicate how man may attain it. But

the clue to the understanding of this is found in a vital relationship with Jesus, whereby the Christian is enabled with more or less success to possess and to exhibit the spirit of Jesus in his behavior. It is true that the place of Jesus in the Christian's life is often represented in formal ways, and that the authority of Christ is sometimes claimed for pretensions of ecclesiasticism which are open to moral criticism. But the true Christian is one who finds in his experience that Jesus brings so illuminating and uplifting an insight into the values of life that he turns constantly to Jesus for aid in his endeavors to determine what he ought to do. Christian ethics, of course, agrees with other types of ethics in most of its affirmations. But it insists on making supreme the test of Christlikeness, because the constant experience of relationship with Jesus brings the deepening conviction that in the Christlike spirit we have the best possible equipment for making our ethical inquiries with a due regard to all human values, and the surest means of commanding that emotion of loyalty which gives carrying power to moral action.

The necessity for a historical understanding of ethics.—When inadequate conceptions of what is right have been glorified by sentiments of loyalty, a very serious moral problem results. On the one hand, growing knowledge calls for an abandonment or an alteration of certain practices; on the other hand, loyalty to the beliefs of parents and trusted friends seems to call for steadfastness in the customary practices. What must it have cost a high-minded man to refuse to accept a challenge to fight a duel in the days when "honor" was supposed to require this way of settling disputes!

The historical understanding of morality furnishes a way of improving moral ideals without a serious wrench to loyalty. If it is once seen that the moral code of any age is the outgrowth of the social experience of that age, it immediately becomes clear that an enlarging experience will demand expression in a better code. It will be found that the sentiment of loyalty to the highest good can be carried over constructively into the requirements of a changed situation without that seeming denial of sacred things which occurs when the traditional code is uncritically disparaged.

It is important for Christians to know that ethical ideals have been developing not only during biblical times, but also throughout Christian history. During most of that period the changes were so slow that the moral code of one generation usually sufficed for the needs of the next. But in our day, owing to the rapid alteration of conditions of industry and the development of transportation facilities, the conditions of life are changing with appalling rapidity. It is characteristic of the youth of today that the moral scruples of the past generation are felt to be too narrow to guide creative, forward-looking endeavors. A moral tension exists which is the perplexity and the despair of many a parent. The importance of acquiring a historical understanding of the relationship between moral ideals and the actual conditions of life is imperative today as perhaps never before in history. Only with such knowledge can we hope to work our way into an understanding of new duties without a disastrous breach with the loyalties of the past.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Make a list of the things which you judge "good" or "bad" in the course of an ordinary day's experience, e.g., your breakfast, the weather, your clothes, your teacher or employer, your "job," your companions. In how many cases can you tell just *why* you judge as you do?
2. Give instances of conflicts between "goods" in your own life. How do you decide which to select? How does the study of ethics help us to get the most out of life?
3. How many of your moral convictions are the result of your own critical thinking? How is the moral experience of the past made available for us? Perhaps the most important duty inculcated in children is obedience. Why is obedience so stressed? Is obedience so prominent a duty in older people? How do you account for the difference?
4. Is it morally desirable that each generation should follow exactly the moral precepts of a preceding generation? Discuss the family feuds in the Kentucky mountains in the light of the foregoing question.
5. Do you *feel* more intensely the importance of a religiously defined duty than of a duty not so defined? E.g., which seems more important, to go to church or to go to an uplifting lecture? Is perjury any worse than lying? Why is it more severely punished? Is a "sacred cause" morally different from any other good cause? If so, wherein does the difference lie?
6. Why is it necessary to know the history of ethical ideals? Does history reveal an unchanging code of ethics? Are there any precepts in the Bible which have been left behind in the course of Christian history? How does a knowledge of the history of ethics help us to an intelligent valuation of our own duties?

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CHAPTER II

SOME ASPECTS OF HEBREW ETHICS

Christian ideals did not appear suddenly without any relation to previous history. Jesus was a Jew and his first disciples were trained as Jews. Their loyalties, their conceptions of right and wrong, their attitude toward their fellow-men, their ideal of the highest good, and their hope for the future were all shaped by their experience in the Jewish community. Some aspects of that Jewish inheritance have continued to dominate Christian thinking down to our own day.

The religious character of Hebrew morals.—The national life of the Hebrews was characterized by the vivid belief that their welfare depended on the active co-operation of their God. Only as armies were empowered by Yahweh could they conquer. Only as the wisdom of Yahweh should guide rulers and judges could they rightly organize and control social life. But Yahweh would make his contribution only if he deemed his people worthy to receive it. It was supremely important, therefore, to know the requirements of Yahweh. Ethics consisted in doing the will of God. Morality, when thus viewed, is a high and solemn religious dedication.

The theological interpretation of ethics.—Such a theological attitude as that above described may furnish thoroughly wholesome and inspiring moral guidance if theology is kept in close touch with the actual experiences of men. But if, for any reason, theology becomes

stereotyped and formal, attention may be diverted from real moral issues. The great prophets, for example, found men more concerned with matters of correct ritual than with the actual social conditions in the cities. Jesus was compelled to rebuke religious men because they cared more for theologically defined customs than for the spiritual welfare of men and women around them. The theological interpretation of ethics is magnificent when the will of God is discovered in real moral tasks. It may defeat the best morality if custom and tradition usurp the first place.

The moral message of the great prophets.—The great prophets were characterized by a moral passion which swept all else before it. They regarded national disasters as evidence that Yahweh was displeased with his people. They declared that the reason for this divine displeasure lay in the moral offenses of the people. The prophets sharply denounced the supposition that God cares more for correct ritual than he does for moral conduct. They declared that the things well-pleasing to God are precisely those human values which it is the business of ethics to interpret. The messages of the prophets are like nothing else in all literature. They are flaming with religious zeal; but that zeal is through and through ethical. In the prophetic books of the Old Testament we have the theological interpretation of morals at its best.

The social setting of the ethics of later Judaism.—The destruction of the national life of the Hebrews brought important consequences in the development of ethical thinking. It was assumed that disaster was God's way of punishing men for not having done his will. But the destruction of the nation, culminating in

the looting and the wrecking of the temple itself, was a disaster almost too terrible to contemplate. Its occurrence could have only one meaning. God must be inconceivably offended by the conduct of his people; so much so that he had abandoned the temple and departed from the land of Judea. How under these circumstances could God be reconciled? The sins which had been committed against him must have been more grievous than had been supposed. If ever God were to return and to be favorable to the land, a stricter code of morals than had hitherto prevailed must be put into practice.

Legalism as an outgrowth of this moral earnestness.—In the endeavor to discover the things which would please Yahweh, the story of Israel's past was studied in order to learn from the glorious days of old. The rituals and practices which had been hallowed in history were brought again to mind. In addition, devout souls elaborated forms of worship and ceremonies of propitiation believed to be pleasing to God. The supremely ethical emphasis of the prophets was not lost; but it was merged in a larger total of precepts, partly ethical and partly ritualistic. In the time of Jesus we find the Pharisees more alert to certain minutiae of Sabbath-keeping than to the uncharted and unpredictable needs of humanity on the Sabbath. It is important for us to understand this type of legalism; for it has persisted in Christian ethics, and has puzzled men by its strange combination of deep moral earnestness with a lack of ethical perspective.

The noble aspects of legalism.—Legalism represents a thoroughly religious way of conceiving the moral life.

It is believed that God has revealed his will in precise fashion. Duty therefore is clear. The moral man will dedicate himself to the Divine Will. Conscientiousness is developed in remarkably definite ways. Right and wrong are sharply distinguished. Right is what God has commanded. Wrong is what God has forbidden. Inasmuch as it is believed that the will of God is revealed in the sacred Scriptures, the legalist regularly and diligently studies those Scriptures. He thus constantly nourishes his thinking on the noble ideals there set forth. He learns to love the law of God. There is an admirable staunchness and a certainty about his moral convictions. He is conscious of living in relation to God, and is striving to meet God's approval. All other considerations are secondary to this aim. We can all recall legalists whose character has won our complete admiration. Something of the whole-souled consecration of the legalist is essential to the highest morality.

Some defects of legalism.—The primary defect of legalism is that it is concerned with a collection of precepts rather than with the actual exigencies of life itself. It is true that the Scriptures which the legalist uses grew out of life; they embody pertinent and wholesome directions for moral behavior. But the study of a book can never take the place of a study of life itself. When, as is the case with the Bible, the precepts come from a distant past, the student is likely to be confronted with commandments some of which have little application to the present. The second of the Ten Commandments, for example, belongs to a day when idolatry was prevalent. Only by analogy and by somewhat far-fetched interpretation can it be made to yield

guidance for us today. The scribes in the time of Jesus were more concerned with the analysis of written precepts than with the sympathetic understanding of the needs of people around them. They could tithe mint, anise, and cummin, and forget the weightier matters of the law. The legalist is likely to cling tenaciously to formal requirements without asking seriously whether these do or do not best serve human interests.

Again, if the guidance of conduct is to be derived exclusively from Scripture, it is imperative that that Scripture be rightly interpreted. Official interpreters inevitably arise—the scribes of later Judaism, the doctors of the Catholic church in medieval times, the theologians in Protestantism. These interpreters almost inevitably are scholars with a taste for literary study. They become interested in technical problems connected with the understanding of the literature which they study. The interpretations which they pass on to the common people are likely to be strongly institutional and theological. The ethics thus expounded tends to become academic. Sometimes, as apparently was the case in Jesus' day, an aristocratic distinction is made between the experts and the "people who know not the law." Legalism runs the risk of becoming dehumanized. The magnificent religious devotion engendered by legalism thus may estrange its devotees from the broader and less formal aspects of human life. The morals of "orthodox" Jews in the civilization of the twentieth century might well be studied as an instance of the outcome of legalism.

The influence of the eschatological hope.—The prophets of Israel kept the faith of their people alive by the assurance that some time Yahweh would intervene

to rescue his people from their misery. But as time went on, it became more and more evident that such a rescue would involve a radical alteration of the forces in control of the destinies of the Hebrew people. Only by some miracle of power could the glory of Israel be re-established.

In so far as thinking was influenced by these apocalyptic visions, certain emphases appeared which had a bearing on ethics. In the first place, the present course of events was depreciated in contrast to the glorious future. The "present evil age" must be brought to an end by the invasion of heavenly forces. This meant a revolutionary rather than an evolutionary conception of the way in which to attain the highest good. It rendered impossible a positive valuation of existing social institutions. The ethics of the Kingdom were set largely in contrast to the customs of men in the present order.

The conception of reward and punishment.—Since the existing social order was thought of as something which must be destroyed before the consummation of the Kingdom was possible, there was a hiatus between present achievement and ultimate reward. The law of Yahweh was to be kept in order to please Yahweh, who in his own way and in his own good time would reward the faithful by admitting them to a share in the Kingdom. There is always the danger of artificiality in the conception of a reward. The thing which is done in order to secure the reward need not have any inherent causal relationship to the reward itself. At its worst it degenerates into a sort of commercial transaction. One "claims God's promise" on presentation of a minimum of good works.

But the conception of divine reward has also its uplifting side. Instead of seeking always to make sure of his own happiness, the moral man is to do what is right, regardless of personal consequences, trusting to God to reward him in the right way and at the proper time. Thus morals are prevented from degenerating into a mere seeking of utilitarian benefits. This conception of divine reward was effectively used by Jesus to inculcate attitudes which would inevitably involve self-denial and sacrifice. But Jesus so defined man's duty as to avoid any exaltation of formalism.

The Christian heritage from Judaism.—Christians can never be too grateful for the Hebrew Scriptures. In them we have a sublime interpretation of the good life in terms of a religious devotion which is at the same time moral. The Hebrew prophets will always challenge and rebuke formal and inhuman conceptions of religion. The Psalms and the Wisdom literature will always reveal the dignity of a life which is seeking God's approval. The content of the Hebrew ideal is an inspiration to all ages.

But, largely because the Hebrew Scriptures have been interpreted by scribes and theologians rather than by historians, the legalism of later Judaism has been perpetuated in Christianity, in spite of the opposition of great Christian leaders. It still finds a large place in Christianity as well as in modern Judaism. It does, indeed, preserve the sturdy conscientiousness which is so exalted by the prophets, and thus helps to tone up the moral energy of Christianity. But it also today, as in the time of Jesus, binds heavy burdens of ritual, of formal observance, of stereotyped theological ideas,

upon men's shoulders. It creates unnecessary distinctions between strict formalists and those who use more direct and informal ways of determining moral conduct. One aspect of Christian ethics in all ages is the task of winning freedom from the legalistic method, while conserving the noble spirit of consecration which it embodies.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What advantage is there in identifying morality with the will of God? Do those who thus define morality seem to you to be more admirable in character than those who define morality without reference to God?
2. Does the purpose to do the will of God necessarily lead to good judgment as to what is right? A New England farmer chopped off his right hand because it had been instrumental in wrongdoing. He believed he was obeying God (see Matt. 5:30). How would you judge his action?
3. How did the great prophets criticize the religion of their people? What did they put first in religion? Why do we value the prophets so highly today?
4. What is "legalism"? How does the legalist ascertain the will of God? How did the scribes in Judaism determine moral questions? Did their method of studying the Scriptures lead to a wholesome moral life? Why does a conscientious Jew refuse to eat pork? Are his reasons good ones?
5. What moral defect is there in doing a good deed for the sake of a reward? Ought virtue to be its own reward?
6. In what respects have Jewish ideals entered into Christian ethics?

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CHAPTER III

THE ETHICAL IDEAL OF JESUS

The importance of a right understanding of Jesus.—The Christian is a man who confesses himself to be a disciple of Jesus. His moral life is organized and controlled by the central purpose to be a worthy disciple. Thus it is of very great practical importance that we should rightly understand the teachings and the ideals of Jesus. Many modern treatises on Christian ethics are simply attempts to portray the teachings of Jesus in systematic form as a guide to right living.[1]

Some difficulties to be faced.—It is not easy to determine precisely what Jesus taught. There are two considerations which the interpreter of the New Testament must face.

1. The differing denominations of Christendom all appeal to Jesus as authority for their beliefs. High churchmen believe that Jesus established a fully organized church and committed its guidance to an apostolic priesthood. Democratic Christian bodies believe that Jesus gave to all his followers equal rights and equal authority to interpret his will. Advocates of war and advocates of peace both quote Jesus. Fundamentalists and modernists both claim to be truthfully interpreting the gospel. Every Christian reads the teachings of Jesus with the feeling that Jesus will, of course, sanction what the reader believes. It is possible to find detached

[1] E.g., W. N. Clarke, *The Ideal of Jesus;* F. G. Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character; Jesus Christ and the Social Problem;* C. J. Cadoux, *The Guidance of Jesus for Today.*

sayings to support almost any doctrine. Our current prejudices make it very difficult for us to go back nineteen centuries and discover what ideals really lay in the mind of Jesus.

2. Critical historical study calls attention to some matters which cannot be overlooked. The gospels were written a generation or more after the death of Jesus. Obviously they contain only a small fraction of his total sayings. The different gospels do not always give the same version of a saying. They do not always put it in the same setting or give it the same meaning. It is becoming more and more clear to students of the gospels that the writers were more concerned to persuade their readers of the Lordship of Jesus than to engage in minute and critically careful historical narrative. The sayings which are recorded are those which had come to be familiar in the early communities because they seemed to have some special message for Christians in the first century. Strictly speaking, they represent edifying exposition of a few selected sayings of Jesus for the benefit of Christians who faced problems and situations frequently very different from those which modern Christians face. The gospels cannot be treated as if they were shorthand reports of actual conversations. We cannot ignore the possibility that the evangelists, in their desire to be helpful, gave interpretations of some of the sayings of Jesus which differed from the original intent. For example, a comparison of Matthew's beatitudes with those reported by Luke shows important differences. Which represent the actual teaching of Jesus?[1]

[1] The following books discuss the problems involved in the historical interpretation of the New Testament writings: E. D. Burton, *Some*

The historical interpretation of the gospels.—The gospel writers were primarily concerned to strengthen the faith of those for whom they were writing. Just as a good sermon addresses itself to the actual spiritual needs of the people to whom it is preached, so the gospels were adapted to the religious problems of the time in which they were written. This fact is both a liability and an asset. It means that some things which are of primary concern to us moderns are not mentioned in the recorded teachings of Jesus, just because these modern questions did not exist when the gospels were written. On the other hand, some of the questions discussed in detail have to do with ritualistic practices or with conceptions long since obsolete in Christianity. It is only by analogy that we may apply such teachings to our present-day problems. We are thus driven by the historical study of the gospels to seek the spirit and intention of the teachings there recorded instead of being content with a mere tabulation of precepts.

Jesus' method of teaching.—When we examine the moral teachings of Jesus, as recorded in the gospels, we find that like the teachings of any great moral leader, they express principles of living which are recognized as eminently good, as soon as they are understood.

Principles of Literary Criticism and Their Application to the Synoptic Problem; Burkitt, *The Gospel History and Its Transmission;* Burkitt, *The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus;* Wernle, *Die synoptische Frage* (English translation, *The Sources of Our Knowledge of the Life of Christ*); A. Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu* (English translation, *The Sayings of Jesus*); G. D. Castor, *Matthew's Sayings of Jesus;* J. Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (a full bibliography is furnished). On the problem of the Fourth Gospel: W. Sanday, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel;* E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel; Its Purpose and Theology;* B. W. Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate.*

Jesus had a way of talking about common duties so as to glorify them with religious significance. If we feel the spiritual greatness of Jesus and of his way of interpreting morality, the critical difficulty of exactly identifying the words of Jesus is of comparatively little importance. The spirit of his teachings and the nature of his ethical ideals are preserved in the convictions which he inspired in those who loved him quite as truly as in the precise words which he uttered.

Jesus and the scribes.—Scribism is a form of religion which is concerned first of all with the content of a written system. The scribe gives moral guidance by "applying" fixed precepts to specific cases. Always the sanctity of the system is put first. Human needs must adapt themselves to the system. Jesus' attitude was precisely the reverse. Systems must be adapted to man, not man to systems. Jesus determined what was right by a direct valuation of the circumstances, rather than by the exegesis of a written law. Even when he quoted Scripture to support his position, we feel that his real reason for deciding as he did lay in his understanding of life itself rather than in the mere appeal to Scripture. The reader who is looking for a systematized discussion of ethics in the gospels will be disappointed. We have a series of detached pictures. Frequently a saying of Jesus is recorded in relation to some particular incident. Jesus was evidently more concerned with the actual life of people around him than he was with theoretical questions. Many of his teachings are simply commentaries on incidents which he had observed.

Christian ethics must not use Jesus' teachings legalistically.—The above-mentioned fact leads to certain

significant consequences in our study of Christian ethics. It means that if we try to use the gospels as if they were formal compendiums, we are misinterpreting the ethics of Jesus. Even if we had an infallibly correct account of all his sayings, we should be hopelessly out of harmony with the mind of Jesus if we were to use these sayings as the scribes used the teachings of the Old Testament. Christian ethics is something quite different from scribism.

Jesus' devotion to the Kingdom of God.—We have already seen how the Hebrew conception that God would ultimately establish his rule of righteousness on earth had served to keep alive the faith and devotion of Jews who had every reason to be discouraged. Jesus reaffirmed this belief in the coming Kingdom of God. It constituted the standard by which all conduct was to be judged. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."[1] Every right-minded man should aim to become a worthy citizen of this Kingdom. Jesus' opposition to the legalism of the scribes was based on his conviction that the conventional standards of living which they inculcated were insufficient to entitle one to membership in the Kingdom. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven."[2] In the place of a list of virtues or a system of commandments, Jesus urged a glowing devotion to the Kingdom of God. This led to a relative depreciation of petty ritualistic requirements. These are mere outer deeds, worthless unless they accompany and promote the inner life of devotion to the Kingdom. "Woe unto you,

[1] Matt. 6:33. [2] Matt. 5:20.

scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, nor suffer them that are entering to go in."[1] On the other hand the ideal of the Kingdom involved such rigorous scrutiny of motives and conduct that one should be conscious of having acted under the eye of God. "Take heed that ye do not your righteous acts before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven."[2] "Thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee."[3]

What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God?—This is a question which has exercised the minds of scholars for the past quarter of a century.[4] As the sayings of Jesus have been studied in the light of the current conceptions of his day, it has become clear that he was addressing people in terms of an ideal which had been a motive for religious devotion ever since the time of the prophets. It was a commonplace of popular thought that at some time—it was hoped that the time would be soon—God would come in a dramatic way to judge nations and men, and to establish his rule upon earth after destroying the wicked and all their works. Jesus employed this popular picture. He portrayed the Kingdom as something which would come suddenly, surprising men with the remorseless judgment of God. He depicted the joy of those who should win God's approval, and the dreadful punishment of those who

[1] Matt. 23:13. [2] Matt. 6:1.

[3] Matt. 6:18.

[4] Burton, *The Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 211 ff., assembles the utterances of Jesus on the subject of the Kingdom, along with significant passages from Jewish writers.

were found to be rebellious. These were current ways of thinking, and could be used by Jesus directly as motives for right living. It is idle to speculate as to how literally he meant the pictures to be taken. One who spoke preferably in parables, as Jesus did, was more concerned with the inner attitude induced by an appeal than with the question whether the appeal clothed itself in history or in poetry. The dramatic form of the imagery of the Kingdom was admirably suited to arouse the emotions of men and thus lead them to *feel* the seriousness of moral behavior in the sight of God.[1]

The Kingdom is a social order in which good will shall be supreme.—However and whenever it should be established, the Kingdom was portrayed as a régime where the will of God was to reign. Those forces which oppose his will would be abolished. This meant that there would be no place in the Kingdom for those who did not love and follow God's will. The all-important thing, then, was not to speculate as to the time and the way in which the Kingdom was to be introduced; it was rather to ask the solemn question as to who would be fitted to be citizens of the Kingdom when it should be established. Only men of good will could find a place there. The establishment of such a social order was so stupendous a task that God alone could accomplish it. "The Kingdom as he [Jesus] knew it was God's, and men could no more establish it than they could make the

[1] For discussions of the question as to the precise conception of the Kingdom held by Jesus, see Johannes Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes;* Shailer Mathews, *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament;* H. B. Sharman, *The Teaching of Jesus about the Future;* L. A. Muirhead, *The Eschatology of Jesus;* E. F. Scott, *The Kingdom and the Messiah;* A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus.*

sun rise in heaven."[1] It was no merely relative improvement of things; it was a new kind of society, demanding a new kind of living on the part of those who belonged to it.

The Kingdom contrasted with the present age.—Those who were loyal to the Kingdom must be ready to suffer disabilities while they remained here. Their devotion to God would mean their exclusion from participation in many current practices, and might easily bring persecution upon them. Jesus expected a magnificent courage on the part of his followers. They were to be so sure of the supreme importance of the Kingdom that they could defy the powers of this world. Material possessions, worldly advantage, even intimate personal relationships, must all be held subordinate to the requirements of the Kingdom.

A difficulty to be recognized.—This uncompromising form of the teaching of Jesus raises a real difficulty for Christians today. We no longer look for a catastrophic revolution in history. The ideal of the "Kingdom of God" has been transformed in modern thinking into the conception of a righteous society which is to be evolved out of the existing social structure. The loyal Christian today scarcely expects to live to see the pertect realization of the Kingdom. He must find his reward in the joy of working with God for the upbuilding of the Kingdom rather than in the expectation of being transplanted into a heavenly Utopia. When we realize that Jesus portrayed the Kingdom in terms of opposition to the present social order rather than in terms of the evolution of a better social order the discovery is often disturbing. But

[1] E. F. Scott, *The Ethical Teaching of Jesus*, p. 48.

the difficulty thus created loses much of its force when we realize the character of the Kingdom life.

The Kingdom life may be lived here and now.—Jesus made it clear that the interim between the present day and the establishment of the Kingdom was not to be merely a period of waiting for the great consummation. It was primarily a time for getting ready for the privileges of citizenship when the Kingdom should be established. And the life of preparation for the Kingdom was to be of precisely the same quality as the life of the Kingdom itself. The disciples of Jesus were to begin at once to practice that good will which would be practiced by everyone in the Kingdom. They were immediately to love enemies as well as friends, in order not to be controlled in their conduct by the circumstances of this present evil age. Everyone who adopted the Kingdom life here and now was actually realizing the Kingdom within the radius of his influence and behavior. If all men were to adopt this attitude, the Kingdom would be forthwith established. Only because of the hopeless indifference or wickedness of men must the Kingdom come by violence.

What are the supreme values in the Kingdom?—The Kingdom life springs from a profound experience of companionship with God. It expresses itself in those thoughts and deeds in which God shares. God is the loving Father who desires the good of all his children. The citizen of God's Kingdom will share this attitude. The parables of Jesus are for the most part taken from the realms of everyday life, and they betray such a sympathetic appreciation of the motives and ideals of peasants, artisans, tradesmen, housewives, that we feel

the wholesome interest of Jesus in living people. The very spirit which would put the welfare of men before the technical requirements of the Jewish law would also protest against sacrificing any real present good for a mere formal reward in the future Kingdom.

The program of the Kingdom is not a new legalism.—Jesus did not leave a social or political or industrial program to his followers. He left instead the stern insistence on supreme loyalty to the Kingdom of God. Every generation, if it would share the spirit of Jesus, must share that loyalty. But every generation must assume for itself the responsibility for determining just what that loyalty involves in the way of organization. The social program of a Christian today in a culture which at least formally approves Christian ideals may be very different from the program of a Christian in the ancient world when suspicion was attached to any profession of loyalty to a Kingdom other than that of the Caesars. In any case, the Christian cannot be content with existing institutions so long as they are not in accord with the ideals of the Kingdom.

The creative spirit of loving good will.—Loyalty to the Kingdom means the spirit of unfailing love toward our fellow-men. The deeds of helpfulness recorded in the accounts of Jesus' life show how completely he identified himself with the interests of people around him. He did something much harder than to draw up a formal program for social betterment. He shared the life of men. He frequently opposed existing standards purely on the ground that these ignored primary human needs. Instead of deliberately revising the current rules for fasting, he called attention to the psychological

relationship between fasting and grief; and demanded that ritual should promote honest recognition of human experience.[1] He criticized the strict interpretation of Sabbath requirements because these concentrated attention on rules and regulations rather than on the human needs which love discerned.[2] In discussing the delicate question of divorce, he appealed frankly to fundamental human nature over against technical regulations which might be used as a cloak for selfishness. We are to ask how God created man and woman rather than to inquire what Moses wrote about the matter.[3] Instead of trying technically to define a neighbor, Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, who embodied the spirit of neighborliness, in contrast to the unneighborly, though ecclesiastically correct, behavior of the priest and the Levite.[4]

In brief, the Kingdom of God is of such a character that membership in it is conditioned on a spirit of loving good will toward men. This spirit will inevitably be creative. It will seek out ways in which men may be served in the spirit of love. It will, in time, create organizations through which this service may be more effectively rendered. But it is always greater than any organizations. It is a social spirit, in that it demands right social relations between men; but it is at the same time a spirit of revolutionary criticism when confronted with institutions which have become formal and out of touch with vital needs.

The brotherhood of the Kingdom.—While, of course, the disciple of Jesus must be kind and helpful to enemy

[1] Mark 2:18 ff.; Matt. 9:14 ff.; Luke 5:33 ff.

[2] Mark 2:23 ff.; 3:1–5; Matt. 12:11 ff.; Luke 6:1 ff.

[3] Mark 10:2–12; Matt. 19:3–12.

[4] Luke 10:29 ff.

as well as to friend, yet it was only with those who shared the inner ideals of the early Christian that he could be intimate. The followers of Jesus felt themselves to be members of a select company already living the Kingdom life. This fellowship was a source of spiritual strength. It carried with it an especial responsibility for those of the brotherhood. For only as this brotherhood should be true to the Kingdom could it be expected that others would be won. A genuinely religious society thus came into existence, not by any formal organization, but through the sheer necessity of mutual help and encouragement.

In this brotherhood, certain special relationships became possible. All class distinctions were obliterated. No one within the brotherhood could claim the right to rule over his fellows. All were to be equally humble and equally devoted to the Kingdom. There was thus a glimpse of the kind of society which would prevail when the Kingdom should have come in its fulness. Meantime the little group of disciples constituted a special social order, in which the principles of the Kingdom rather than the principles of worldly institutions prevailed.

General summary of Jesus' ideal.—(1) The primary duty of every man is to become a citizen of the Kingdom of God. This presupposes a confident faith that the ultimate of history is the establishment of the reign of God. Jesus bade men judge all conduct, all earthly advantages, all institutions, in the light of this supreme consummation. Men are to seek first the Kingdom of God.

2. In order to discover what is required of a citizen of the Kingdom, one must know the mind of God.

God's mind is expressed in the attitude of righteous, fatherly love. One may trust the love of God, and may be led through this experience of trust to discover what love is and what love prompts one to do.

3. This spirit of love leads one to look beyond conventional rules. One must always seek directly to understand human needs. If conventionally accepted rules meet the need, well and good; if they do not, one must go beyond the specific requirements.

4. The supreme duty of those who love and trust God is to live the Kingdom life here and now, regardless of immediate consequences. Good will may be exercised before the Kingdom actually comes.

5. Those who possess faith in the Kingdom will constitute a religious brotherhood, separated from the world in spirit. In this brotherhood will be exhibited precisely the virtues which mark the Kingdom of God. It thus constitutes a new society, religious and moral rather than institutional in character.

6. In his method of determining what is morally required, Jesus was what we today would call an empiricist. He was never satisfied with a formal commandment, however sacred it was. He insisted on seeing the precise circumstances in each instance, and in adapting conduct to the specific needs of each case. He thus gained the reputation of depreciating religious authority. But this was in the interests of the supremacy of human values. Religious reverence must not excuse one from asking seriously what ought to be done in each specific case.

7. Jesus left no system of ethics. His teachings were for the most part occasional, usually being the interpreta-

tion of the practice of loving good will in specific cases. A Christian ethics must be true to this spirit animating the sayings of Jesus. To make a complete and final list of precepts out of the teachings of Jesus is historically impossible; and if attempted it would violate the spirit of Jesus' own teaching.

8. The moral life, as Jesus portrayed it, involves a profound religious faith. Merely to attempt to carry out Jesus' instructions without sharing the religious content of his consciousness is not enough. The supreme good is to experience a spiritual oneness of purpose with the loving Heavenly Father. Anything which stands in the way of this experience must be removed in order to permit a genuine Christian life.

9. The virtues most stressed by Jesus are those essential to the practice of loving good will; some of these are: sincerity, or utter truthfulness of spirit in the sight of God (as contrasted with hypocrisy); humility, involving honest recognition of one's faults and weakness, and the willingness to learn better ways of living (in contrast to pharisaic self-righteous pride); trust in God, so strong and constant that one will be able to endure hardship when necessary, sure that God's reward is above all else; self-denial, as the fruit of such trust, enabling one to devote himself utterly to the Kingdom, even at the cost of hardship (in contrast with indulgence in luxury or wealth); a forgiving spirit, as the expression of a Godlike generosity; helpfulness toward others (in contrast to self-interest); inner purity (as contrasted with mere outward respectability); evangelistic zeal as an expression of a generous desire to share the Christian life with others.

How are the teachings of Jesus to be used today?—In the light of our study of the ideal of Jesus, certain principles for the use of his teachings in modern life become evident. The observation of these would prevent much perplexity.

1. *The teacher is greater than the teachings.*—It should never be forgotten that all the recorded sayings of Jesus would occupy only a small fragment of the total time of his ministry. The gospels are windows through which we may catch glimpses of the life of Jesus. The teachings must never be a rigid wall restricting our vision to what lies on this side of the wall. The apostle Paul and the uplifting message of the Fourth Gospel reveal to us the larger inspiration of a vital relationship to Christ. The teachings of Jesus must be so used as to make us better acquainted with him, never as a substitute for such acquaintance.

2. *The best guidance for Christian conduct is the inner experience of the spirit of Jesus.*—Jesus' chief concern was to make men *feel* the reality of the moral considerations which were so clear to him. When the lawyer tried to get Jesus to define the word "neighbor," Jesus replied by telling the story of the Good Samaritan, in order to elicit from the lawyer an *appreciation* of a neighborly deed (Luke 10:25 ff.). In drawing the contrast between his ideals and the current practices of the Pharisees, Jesus insisted that the all-important thing was to feel the inner power of right-mindedness, rather than to split hairs over definitions. His supreme aim was to create in his disciples the living experience of creative good will, so that moral deeds might be the spontaneous outgrowth of a right spirit rather than the slavish following of external rules.

The historical understanding of the teachings of Jesus, therefore, leads us inevitably to the conception of Christian ethics as a never ending creative task on the part of the disciples of Jesus. The teachings of Jesus are the indispensable means by which we may attempt to become so intimately acquainted with him that we may think and act worthily of him. But the spirit of loving, creative good will leads true Christians to be ever learning from the facts of life as well as from the precepts in the New Testament.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Can we treat the gospels as if they were complete accounts of the teachings of Jesus?
2. Do we find that the gospels always agree in their interpretation of a saying of Jesus? Compare the version of the Beatitudes in Matt. 5:3–12 with the version in Luke 6:20–26. Compare Jesus' teaching concerning divorce as given in Matt. 19:3–12 with the account in Mark 10:2–12. Compare especially Matt. 19:9 with Mark 10:11. Is it always easy to be sure precisely what Jesus taught?
3. Did Jesus seem to be concerned to give a complete system of ethics? What seems to you to have been his chief concern?
4. How did the scribes expound ethics? What was the attitude of Jesus toward the scribes? Are the teachings of Jesus ever expounded today by the same method which the scribes used in expounding the Scriptures in their day? Would a tabulation of the teachings of Jesus give us a complete Christian ethics?
5. How did Jesus picture the relation between the Kingdom of God and the present age? How do we picture it in modern thought? Is it an advantage or a disadvantage that the teachings of Jesus contain no specific directions for the organization of modern society?
6. What social attitude results from devotion to the Kingdom of God? How does such devotion make one bold in criticizing

customary practices? How does the attitude of loyalty to the Kingdom of God prevent one from yielding to other loyalties if these are injurious to human welfare?

7. In what respects did the brotherhood of disciples constitute a peculiar group? Could the Kingdom life be more perfectly lived within the brotherhood than outside? If so, why?
8. How can the teachings of Jesus be used to acquaint us with the spirit of Jesus himself? Can the teachings be properly understood without such an acquaintance with Jesus? How does the historical interpretation of the gospels help us rightly to use the precepts of Jesus?

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CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANITY IN A NON-CHRISTIAN WORLD

The brotherhood of the Kingdom.—It is difficult for us who live in a so-called "Christian civilization" to picture the world in which the primitive disciples lived. They were generally regarded by their Jewish acquaintances as a group of misguided fanatics. The most precious elements in the early Christian faith aroused distrust and ridicule. Persecution began early. The Christians were thus made acutely conscious of living in an unfriendly world. This very unfriendliness naturally intensified their devotion to Christ. It mattered little whether their conduct brought approval and happiness in this world. It mattered much whether they could continue to enjoy the approval of Christ. Under the stress of persecution, they came more and more to think of themselves as a "little flock" set apart from the rest of mankind by the fact that their citizenship was in heaven. They must endure the trials inevitable in an evil age as best they might, setting their hopes securely on the glory to be theirs when the Kingdom should come with the reappearing of the Lord.

The life of the brotherhood.—Since Jesus might come at any time, his disciples must be ever watchful, ready at any time to welcome his judgment. The early disciples gathered together frequently in order to recall the life and teachings of Jesus, to confirm one another in the faith, to pray for guidance, and to help one another

to live in accordance with the requirements of Christ.[1] So completely did they subordinate all worldly interests to the religious life of the group, that in at least one instance they gave up all claims to private property.[2] They "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers."[3] To engage in common worship and in discussion of the Kingdom life, to watch over the brethren so as to keep the faith and the conduct of every member of the group pure, to testify courageously their conviction that Jesus was Messiah, to preach and to heal in his name, these were the chief activities of the Christians in the early days.[4]

The brotherhood as a separatist community.—The early Christians did not expect the Christian ideal to be realized in the social and political order as it then existed. Existing institutions they thought of as belong-

[1] Acts 2:42.

[2] "All that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need" (Acts 2:44–45).

[3] Acts 2:42.

[4] A word should be said here concerning the communism mentioned in the Book of Acts. It was totally different from modern communistic theories. Modern communism is primarily a system of co-operative production of goods, with a definite plan for their equitable distribution. These early Christians had no thought of production at all. They simply rid themselves of individual earthly possessions (which they could not take with them into the Kingdom in any case) and used the proceeds to provide for the needs of anyone in the group who might be in want. There is no hint of a program for the reconstruction of the industrial order. All that was involved was that Christians should so love one another that "no one said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own" (Acts 4:32). Whenever production of goods is mentioned in the New Testament we find the uncritical acceptance of the existing wage or slave system.

ing to "this present evil age." The Christian group was like a little island in a sea of wickedness. Its life was, so far as possible, self-contained. Relations with the "world" were perilous.

> Love not the world, nor the things in the world. . . . . For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.[1]

The single-mindedness of early Christian ethics.—The point of view set forth above made it possible for the early Christians to avoid many of the perplexities which arise whenever conduct must be so ordered as to fit into existing conditions. Since the highest good was looked for in the coming Kingdom, rather than in the present order, immediate consequences could be ignored. If a rigorous devotion to the will of Christ brought suffering or privation, the Christian could glory in this evidence that he preferred Christ to all worldly benefits.

This single-minded attitude has both its noble and its unfortunate sides. It makes for a wonderful devotion. To be true to Christ at all costs, to be ready to defy the allurements of comfort or wealth or reputation for the sake of following Christ—this heroic attitude wins our reverent approval and stirs us to a deeper consecration. But the dangers of such an unworldly attitude are also apparent. "Peculiar" customs may be valued just because they distinguish the Christian from the non-Christian. Aloofness from the "world" may exclude the culture and the learning with which Christian life might be enriched and beautified. As a matter of fact this early Christian attitude was inevitably modified

[1] I John 2:15–17.

as the church came to plan for a long-continued existence in the world instead of for an imminent "end of the world." At the same time the single-minded devotion of these early Christians is a perpetual challenge to men not to permit their allegiance to Christ to be obscured by lesser interests. A religion worth suffering and dying for is a religion of spiritual power.

The Christian spirit did not remain separatist.—The early disciples could not entirely avoid contacts with the established customs of the society in which they lived. Since the Christians for the most part came from humbler classes, they must perforce earn their living in accordance with the industrial customs in existence. But these customs were often implicated with pagan worship or with social practices of doubtful morality. We today regard slavery as un-Christian; but the early Christians could not withdraw from the slave system. The Roman Empire was a stubborn fact, and Christians had to find some way in which to reconcile their loyalty to the Kingdom of God with the practical requirements of earthly government. The early Jewish conceptions of the will of God had to meet hellenistic ideals. The apostle Paul's courageous fight for the full recognition of Gentiles who had not fulfilled the Jewish law was simply the forerunner of a long development in which the "hellenization of Christianity" was accomplished. The very power of the Christian movement carried it far beyond the boundaries of the early brotherhood. It became in three or four centuries the bearer of civilization instead of being a separatist group.

Later attempts to reintroduce the primitive Christian ideals.—The external expansion of Christianity was not

entirely a triumph of Christian ideals. Everyone who has studied the history of the church knows how frequently it became corrupt. But there have always been preachers and leaders who frankly faced the facts and called the church back to lofty ideals. It has often been assumed that the surest way in which to purify Christianity is to summon men back to the New Testament teachings. In thus challenging conventional ideals the reforming group usually met ridicule and persecution and thus found itself strangely repeating the experience of the early Christians. This reinforced them in their conviction of the correctness of their position. Ignoring the fact that the early brotherhood inevitably was compelled by historical circumstances to develop into something different and not realizing that the way out of any difficulty is to look forward rather than backward, conscientious men have frequently attempted to purify Christianity by reproducing literally the life of the early brotherhood.

The Anabaptists in the period of the Protestant Reformation took this position. They insisted that true Christians must cease to compromise with the corrupt world. The existing church seemed to them to be hopelessly entangled in evil. They insisted that every member of the new brotherhood should be baptized anew as an expression of personal dedication to Christ. They demanded the complete separation of church and state, in order that the Christian group might be free to obey Christ without being subject to governmental discipline. They refused to take oath (because Jesus had forbidden it) or to bear arms. They frequently attempted to establish communism. One early Ana-

baptist document declared: "He that hath property may not partake of the Lord's Supper."

This separatist conception dominates the ethical ideals of several religious bodies in Protestantism. A profound distrust of "worldly" practices prevails in these bodies. There is a strong tendency for members of the faith to live in exclusive communities where their ideals and practices can be maintained without friction with the "world." Simplicity of dress is often emphasized as a mark of emancipation from the dictates of fashion. The refusal to take oath or to bear arms eliminates any aggressive share in political or national life. There is a serious attempt literally to reproduce New Testament practices and rites. We see in these communities a beautiful Christlike simplicity and devotion. The willingness to be unpopular, to defy custom, and to suffer penalties in war time is eloquent testimony to the power of a Christian conscience to hold men steadfast. But such an unyielding code of morals can be maintained only by ignoring or evading relationships which other Christians frankly face. There is always the subtle temptation to take pride in the "peculiar" practices which distinguish the "true believers" from less strict Christians. The seclusion which is practiced leads inevitably to a depreciation of culture, and usually to a suspicious attitude toward any form of education which is not doctrinally controlled. Sooner or later the neglect of liberal education deprives the denomination of broad-minded leaders, and the more ambitious among the younger generation become restless and dissatisfied. Almost inevitably these groups develop "liberal" tendencies, and eventually repeat the history of the early

Christian separatists. Christian devotion cannot permanently be satisfied with aloofness from the world. Sooner or later it is translated into a desire to Christianize the social order. But this involves entering into the life of the age and courageously interpreting the culture of the day in a Christian spirit.

The creative power of the Christian spirit.—The inevitable way in which Christianity bursts the limitations of any narrow system should open our eyes to its true character. To the early Christians the "world" was incorrigibly evil. But after a few centuries men began to talk of a "Christian world," and to plan for the direct guidance of all phases of human life by the church. The modern separatist bodies referred to in this chapter preserve for us an indispensable aspect of Christian loyalty when they insist that Christianity cannot be identified with the easy-going practices of the world at large. But when they assume that God wills precisely the same content of conduct for the twentieth century as for the first, they overlook the fact that the spirit of Jesus is one of creative adventure rather than of formal conformity. Just as Jesus himself refused to confine his ministry to the conventionally approved circle of religious duties, but fellowshiped with outcasts and non-conformists, just as the apostle Paul insisted that Christianity was not to be found in distinctions between Jew and Gentile, but in the living power of Christ, so Christianity has always lost creative power when it has shut itself up within the boundaries of any formal system. It is true today, as it was when the apostle Paul first uttered it, that "the letter killeth; the spirit maketh alive."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did the phrase "this present evil age" mean to the early Christians? How long did they expect the present world-order to last? How did their world-view differ from ours today? Would this difference of world-view make any difference in ethical ideals? If so, what?
2. Was a Christian expected to be an ardent patriot in New Testament times? Is there any difference between early Christian ethics and modern ethics in this respect? How do you account for the difference?
3. A word frequently used in early Christian exhortations is "single-minded." What did it mean? What are the advantages of a single-minded attitude? Today we often hear the ideal of "100 per cent Americanism" praised. Does such single-minded patriotism usually mean a Christian attitude toward immigrants from other lands? What is the moral danger in "single-mindedness"? Is aloofness from other people conducive to the best morality? What was the attitude of Jesus in this matter?
4. Church historians speak of the "Hellenization of Christianity" in the course of the first three centuries. This involved the intermingling of Christian ideals with the interests of the Graeco-Roman culture. Did this intermingling make for a broader type of Christian culture? Did it involve any moral dangers? What became of the primitive Palestinian type of Christianity? Why did it give way to the Hellenistic type?
5. Do you know of any separatist denominations today? Do they feel that they are keeping closer to the New Testament than the denominations which are not so "strict"? Is it possible for us today to feel toward the "world" exactly as the early Christians did? If we think of Christian ethics as the attempt to obey exactly the New Testament precepts are we likely to be sensitive to all the moral problems of our own day? Professor Rauschenbusch tells of a farmer whose milk was so dirty that it was refused by an inspector. He was so angry that he swore. His church disciplined him for swearing, but said nothing about the ethics of trying to sell dirty

milk for babies to drink. Does the New Testament say anything about swearing? Does it say anything about standards of cleanliness for milk-producers? Which of the two faults do you think Jesus would most severely condemn?

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CHAPTER V

THE REGULATION OF CULTURE BY THE CHURCH

The Roman Catholic church was for centuries the only valid form of Christianity in Western Europe. Its adherents today outnumber those of any other form of Christianity. It has worked out a distinct conception of Christian ethics, which is influential not only within that church but also to a greater or less extent in some branches of Protestantism. The present chapter undertakes to show how this type of Christian ethics became prevalent, and to indicate its chief features.

The problem of differences of opinion in the early church.—Every Christian in the primitive church agreed that in order to be eligible to the Kingdom one must live so as to receive the favorable judgment of Christ when he should come. But there was room for difference of opinion on many points. Ought a Christian to observe the rite of circumcision? No clear teaching of Jesus could be cited on this point. What ought to be the Christian's attitude toward meat offered to idols? How should marriage be valued? What should be the Christian's attitude toward the Roman government? What ought to be the content of Christian belief? What should be done in the case of a Christian who had grievously sinned? On what conditions were forgiveness and restoration possible? Early Christian literature abounds in the discussion of questions on which Christians did not agree. In case of disagreement, who was right?

The need of an authoritative definition of Christianity.—The confusion arising from divergent voices in early Christendom could be eliminated if it could be made clear without a peradventure what Christianity really is. Everyone, for example, would be obligated to obey a precept of Jesus if such a precept could be shown to be genuine and its meaning were clear. What was needed was so definite and authoritative a declaration of Christian principles that un-Christian conduct could be laid to an evil will and not to excusable ignorance.

The apostolic test of Christian truth.—By the middle of the second century the need for some authoritative definition of Christian truth was acute. Men who had no real historical connection with early Christianity were advocating fantastic doctrines. It became imperative to distinguish "true" Christianity from spurious forms. For the deciding of this important question, who could best report the mind of Christ? It was declared that those whom he had chosen to be with him and to receive special instruction—the apostles—were to be accepted as the official interpreters of Christ. The Catholic church came to consciousness as the transmitter and defender of that content of faith and practice which it was believed that Christ had intrusted to his apostles, and which the successors of the apostles (the bishops) were authorized to maintain in its purity throughout all time. Obedience to the officials of the church was the supreme duty of every Christian. To organize or to join an unapostolic group of Christians was branded as sin. To object to the doctrines approved by the bishops was rebellion against Christ. Schism and heresy were inexcusable forms of insubordination.

The Roman Catholic program for a Christian life.—Since, according to Catholic theology, every human being is born sinful, the first essential is regeneration. This is accomplished through baptism. After baptism (which is normally administered to infants) comes training in faith and morals by the church. The child must learn to believe what the church teaches in the realm of doctrine, and to appreciate the value of the discipline of the church. After the proper instruction in belief and in principles of moral living, the child is confirmed, thus becoming a responsible member of the church. From this time on, each individual is expected to meet his father confessor at the proper times and to lay bare before him his conduct. While one is required to confess only mortal sins (those which so alienate the sinner from God that he is liable to eternal punishment) one has the privilege of confessing also venial sins (those which do not cause complete alienation from God). Thus through the confessional the individual is brought regularly under the supervision of the church. The father confessor tells the penitent what must be done in order to repair the wrong and to be reinstated in God's favor. The church thus takes responsibility for determining the kind and amount of satisfaction which must be rendered by the sinner in order to be saved. The sacraments of the church, attendance on mass, the reading of devotional literature, and the practice of prayer are all urged as aids to a holy life.

The ideal of a church-controlled culture.—No greater contrast could be imagined than that between the little despised and persecuted group of early Christians, and the Catholic church of the Middle Ages with its

enormous power and prestige. As the Roman Empire become impotent, the church gradually took up some of the most important tasks of good government. Eventually came the glorious dream of Christianizing the whole world. But since a Christian life was conceived as consisting in obedience to the church's voice, so a Christian social order was conceived as one in which the influence of the church should be decisive. It is difficult to overemphasize the service rendered by the church during the Dark Ages when there was no other strong uplifting power. To the church we owe the preservation of whatever culture was retained from the classical days. To the church, men looked for a Christian restraint on the ambitions of warriors and princes. The scholars of the church examined the field of human living with such thoroughness that all questions of ethics received a marvelously detailed analysis. The influence of the Catholic church is incalculably great in our Western civilization.

The content of Catholic ethics.—Catholicism keeps constantly before men the primary duty of obedience to the divine requirements. It puts in the foreground the picture of man's eternal destiny in the next world, and declares that man's fate will be determined by the verdict passed on his character and conduct by God at the time of judgment. Since all men are sinners, the primary moral duty is to avail one's self of the divine provisions for the forgiveness of sin. The penitential discipline of the church is administered by the priests for the benefit of all who will submit to it. Attendance on the religious services of the church, loyalty to the teachings of the church, education under church influences, and reading

books approved by the church are all stressed. In the confessional the Catholic Christian is brought face to face with a comprehensive list of duties which every Christian is expected to fulfil. In religious instruction and in publications Christian attitudes are urged in the realms of the family, the state, industry, and informal social life. In all ethical discussions the conception of responsibility to God is evident. The Catholic system of teaching ethics and of controlling behavior has something of the thoroughness of military discipline about it.[1]

Some questionable aspects of the Catholic ideal.—Catholicism holds that the highest morality cannot be attained unless the supreme authority of the church be recognized. In our day, however, there exist strong secular institutions which promote the public welfare. A Catholic feels that Christian standards are not being maintained unless these are correlated with the authority of the Catholic church. The best form of government would be that in which the Catholic church is legally

[1] The kind of control exercised by the church through the confessional may be seen by examining any manual for the guidance of father confessors. Mortal sins must be confessed. The following sins are specifically treated in one authorized manual (C. Telch, *Epitome Theologiae Moralis*. Insbruck, 1920): doubting or denying the Catholic Faith; despairing of one's salvation; complaining or blaspheming against God and his ordinances; speaking disrespectfully against the church or the sacraments; reading evil books or periodicals (liberal, socialist, or irreligious literature); belonging to a secret society; receiving the sacrament unworthily; perjury; failure to fulfil a vow; failure to attend mass; failure to attend church at Easter; eating meat on fast-days; disobedience to parents; failure to provide for the physical, moral, and religious welfare of one's children; hatred, jealousy, desire to injure another or the use of violence toward another; idleness, thoughts of suicide, drunkenness, theft, bearing false witness, defamation of character; unchaste thoughts or actions; failure to fulfil marriage vows.

recognized. A purely secular government, where religious liberty is granted equally to all forms of religion, fails to give to the Catholic church the position demanded by its conception of Christianity. Public-school education, freed from religious domination, seems less desirable than schools under church control. Any type of scientific or historical training which enables one to come to conclusions without also consulting the voice of the church is looked upon as tending in an anti-Christian direction. The embodiment into Christian ethics of any knowledge resulting from non-ecclesiastical investigation is extremely difficult whenever such knowledge conflicts with the established doctrines of the church. The attempt to carry over the medieval ideal of church control into an age when politics and education have become completely secularized involves friction. In a non-ecclesiastical state, the Catholic church will always seem to be scheming to gain a position of power. Thus in spite of the magnificent service rendered by this church in upholding Christian ideals and training children in moral habits, there exists in the modern world a strong prejudice against Catholicism. The ideal of church control is not welcomed in an age of democratic freedom.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What would be the advantage in the early church of an authoritative pronouncement as to what is required of a Christian? Why was it not possible to settle all questions by quoting what Jesus said? Would it be easy to determine whether circumcision should be required by asking what Jesus taught on the subject? How could an authoritative decision be reached on questions which Jesus did not discuss at all? Can the New Testament decide questions not mentioned in the New Testa-

ment? Are there any questions which Christians today must meet which are not mentioned in the New Testament?

2. How does Roman Catholicism propose to secure agreement among Christians? What gives the church a right to demand the obedience of Christians, according to the Catholic conception? State the doctrine of apostolic authority.
3. Ignatius of Antioch, writing early in the second century, said that a true Christian ought to obey the bishop as he would obey God. Why should such obedience be required? Why were heresy and schism so bitterly condemned? How do Catholics today feel toward non-Catholic bodies of Christians?
4. What are the essentials of a Christian life, according to Catholicism? Why must one be baptized? What is the confessional? What is penance? Do you think Protestants would be more conscientious if they were required to give account of their conduct regularly? How does the confessional furnish an opportunity for moral guidance by the church?
5. What was the attitude of medieval Catholicism toward the institutions of this world? How does this attitude differ from that of the early Christians? What is the Catholic program for Christianizing the social order? Is Catholicism satisfied with a purely secular state which gives equal rights to all forms of religion? Why do Catholics consider parochial schools superior? What is the attitude of the Catholic church toward freedom of teaching in the realms of history and of science?
6. Compare the influence of the Catholic church over a Catholic with the influence of a Protestant church over a Protestant. Which seems to you the greater? The utterances of the Catholic church are almost always treated with respect. Who authorizes such utterances? Individual Protestant ministers sometimes say foolish things. Are Catholic priests as likely to be unwise? Is the Catholic system better adapted than the Protestant system to give right of way to the best and wisest utterances?
7. A Catholic writer on ethics says: "Dogmatic toleration (meaning the recognition of 'an absolute right to practice false as well as true religions') is as eminently absurd a notion as can well be conceived. Only a disordered mind could seriously

entertain it." Do you agree with this statement? How can a "true" religion be identified? How does Catholicism identify it? Does Catholicism recognize the moral value of critical inquiry?

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CHAPTER VI

THE ETHICS OF PROTESTANTISM

The repudiation of the authority of the church.—Luther was gradually led to a position where he had to choose between loyalty to the church and loyalty to his Christian conscience. The consequence was his complete denial of the authority of the Catholic church. This meant the disappearance of the ideal of a church-controlled culture. Political conditions in Germany were such that this Protestant principle of freedom from church control could be positively used to promote the coveted independence of the German states from the authority of the Catholic emperor. There thus arose a new régime of freedom, both personal and political, in which the Catholic church ceased to be a controlling power.

Inasmuch as Christian conduct had been defined in terms of submission to the guidance of the church, this Protestant attitude called for a radical revision of ethical theory.

Salvation by grace, not by works.—Luther taught that instead of relying on the church for salvation, one must look to God alone. God in his mercy has provided in the work of Christ the means by which men may be justified. If, entirely repudiating all thought of personal merit, one confesses his complete sinfulness, and accepts the divine provision in Christ, one may be justified by faith. The full divine merit of Christ is then reckoned to the believer. He need no longer be worrying about his

own frailties. He need not be solicitous about the requirements of the church. He may simply trust in Christ, knowing that this attitude of trust is the one thing which is completely pleasing to God. In this way the Christian life was freed from the jurisdiction of the church.

The motive for good works.—But if salvation is not conditioned on good works, how may we be sure that the Christian will fulfil the requirements of morality? Will he not accept his freedom as an opportunity for lax standards of living? To the Roman Catholic this seems to be the logical outcome of Luther's position. But Luther himself trusted to the wonderful sentiment of gratitude which arises in the heart of the believer when he knows that his sins have all been freely forgiven. Out of this wealth of love the Christian will always be asking, not what he is privileged to do for his own enjoyment, but rather what he is constrained to do by his grateful devotion to Christ. Instead of performing good deeds for the sake of a reward, he performs them as the expression of an already existing love.

How shall the Christian determine what to do?—This conception of the Christian life sets one free to follow his own Christian conscience, instead of depending on the commands of external authority. The pathway is thus open for a first-hand exploration of the needs of human life. The spirit of Jesus which put the immediate interests of living people above the sanctity of any formal code reappears in the ethical theory of Luther. Acting in this spirit Luther was able to make astonishing changes in Christian habits. He could abolish a host of the requirements of the Catholic church by submitting

them to the test of Christian love. If the keeping of fasts and the doing of penance grows out of the motive of fear or of hope for a reward, it is un-Christian. Only that which is the spontaneous expression of Christian faith and love is truly Christian.

The tendency toward emphasis on doctrinal orthodoxy.—Primary emphasis was thus placed on the faith which justifies. But since justification is the free gift of God, men must look to God in order to discover the conditions on which it is granted. It would never do to substitute the speculations of man for the provisions which God has made. Lutheranism thus was led inevitably to insist on the biblical control of faith as the *sine qua non* of the Christian life. While it was asserted that a Christian was free to determine his moral duty after he was justified by faith, it was asserted with equal emphasis that in order to be justified he must accept certain doctrines required by God. It has often been assumed that those who unquestioningly accept conventional dogmas are morally better than those who insist on critical questions. The history of Protestantism abounds in instances where men with the spirit of Christ have been distrusted and persecuted because they did not give their assent to a doctrinal system. This attitude has made it difficult to do moral justice to any "new" conclusions concerning religion. It tends to stereotype Christian ethics, and to exalt conventional conformity as a superior moral attitude.

The new problem of social ethics in Protestantism.—Roman Catholicism conceives the task of Christianizing the social order to be the establishment of church control over all culture. Protestantism, having repudiated the

authority of the church, was compelled to formulate a different program. Lutheranism applied to the social problem the same moral theory which was used in the securing of personal morality. The individual Christian, moved by grateful love to Christ, was expected spontaneously to exhibit the spirit of Christ in all his relations with other men. The ruler of a state must express his Christianity by ruling as a disciple of Jesus. Likewise, the employer of labor must voluntarily exercise Christian love toward those whom he employs. The employee (whom Luther pictured as a "servant") must loyally serve the interests of his master.

It is evident that this solution does not reach those conditions which are socially rather than individually established. Lutheran ethics has tended to lay primary emphasis on those attitudes of the individual which are within his control, and to leave the development of political and industrial enterprise in secular hands. A beautiful personal piety, with conscientious devotion to simple domestic and neighborly virtues, is developed within a culture which may readily be dominated by aggressive nationalism and industrial materialism. As contrasted with Calvinism, Lutheran ethics has been timid in its development of a Christian social ethics, and has easily permitted leadership in the discussion of social problems to pass into non-ecclesiastical hands.

The moral emphasis in Calvinism.—Calvinistic Christianity, like Lutheranism, insisted that salvation was by grace alone. The hold of the Catholic church over Christians was thus broken. But the Bible was declared to contain not only the gospel of salvation by faith; it is also the law of God. If a Christian really

wants to please God he can best accomplish this by obeying the precepts which God has revealed in his Holy Word. Calvinism thus has much more of legalism than has Lutheranism.

The political and social consequences of the appeal to the Bible.—Calvinism insisted that no claim of divine right on the part of a ruler could be permitted to stand if it contradicted the Word of God. The plain man, armed with Scripture, could defy constituted authorities. John Knox in Scotland rebuked Queen Mary, insisting that he must obey God rather than any human being, even if that human being were a queen. Calvinism was thus a vigorous revolutionary force. It provided a way by which Christians might directly engage in political action.

The ideal of a biblical theocracy.—In the place of the Catholic ideal of a church-controlled culture, Calvinism put the ideal of a biblically controlled culture. It was felt that the requirements of the Bible ought to be incorporated into the law of the land.[1] Such movements as that for the compulsory reading of the Bible in the

[1] This ideal is expressed with cogent clearness in the *London-Amsterdam Confession of Faith* (1596):

"It is the office and duty of princes and magistrates, who, by the ordinances of God, are supreme governors under Him over all persons and causes within their realms and dominions, to suppress and root out by their authority all false ministries, voluntary religions, and counterfeit worship of God, ... and on the other hand to establish and maintain by their laws every part of God's Word, His pure religion and true ministry, to cherish and protect all such as are careful to worship God according to His Word, and to lead a godly life in all peace and loyalty; yea to enforce all their subjects, whether civil or religious, to do their duty to God and men, protecting and restraining the evil, according as God hath commanded, whose lieutenants they are here on earth."

public schools in our country are continuations of the Calvinistic spirit. It is largely to Calvinism that Protestantism owes the belief that the social order *can* be Christianized. Nothing is too hard for God; and God's Word is capable of righting all wrongs if only men are compelled to obey it. So reasoned Calvinists.

The limitations of the ideal of a biblical theocracy.—So long as public sentiment is strongly Calvinistic, little difficulty is experienced in maintaining this ideal. But when, as is the case in our country, government rests frankly on the secular basis of the consent of all the people without reference to religious creed, there arises a protest against "Puritanism" and a ridicule of "blue laws" which represent the convictions of only a portion of the population. The slogan of "personal liberty," even though it is often employed in the interest of doubtful practices, gains much of its popular support from the feeling that churchmen are more concerned to make everyone conform to their standards than to discover what humanity really needs. It is difficult for the believer in a biblical theocracy to have entire sympathy with ethical ideals which grow merely out of human experience rather than out of a study of the Bible. With the disestablishment of the church in New England went the possibility of Christianizing the social order in the fashion originally contemplated by Calvinists. The noble zeal of this type of ethics is gradually finding expression in a less legalistic conception.

The Anglican conception of Christian ethics.—The Reformation in England was political rather than primarily religious. It meant in the first instance the elimination of Roman control over English affairs. It

substituted the king for the pope as the religious head. The Catholic ideal was softened into the conception of a church-directed culture—the directing church being, of course, the Anglican body. Christian ethics was conceived, not as a matter of personal consecration purely (Lutheranism), nor as the attempt to enforce biblical precepts by law (Calvinism), but rather as the promotion of the entire national culture under the inspiration and direction of the Anglican church. This attitude has meant on the one hand a remarkably free creative attitude toward the social problems of England, and on the other hand a perplexing tenacity in the matter of valuing church organization and authority above all else. Almost any desirable moral reform can win Anglican support provided it can be subsumed under the ideal of a church-inspired culture. Anglicanism is a spiritualized and nationalized form of Catholicism rather than a branch of Protestantism.

The problem for modern Protestant ethics.—In the course of Protestant history none of the foregoing solutions has proved entirely satisfactory. All of them preserved the medieval conception of the world as a "Christendom," and assumed that we could count on "Christian rulers," "Christian nations," established churches, and the like. But today the world cannot be thus described. Jews and non-Christians have equal political rights with Christians. Laws must be framed so as to protect dissenters from ecclesiastical pressure as well as to secure the churches in their rights. Protestantism is therefore feeling its way into an adequate formulation of the duties of a Christian in an age when overhead control by Christian authority is impracticable,

and yet when the need for Christian influence in the social order is keenly felt.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did the repudiation of the authority of the Catholic church create a new problem in Christian ethics? What moral interpretation does the Catholic church place on schism or heresy? Was Luther a heretic? How could Luther justify his position? Did the repudiation of the authority of the Catholic church have any unfortunate consequences? When the confessional was abolished was it easy for a Christian to know just what was necessary to a Christian life?
2. How did Luther's doctrine of salvation by grace alone free men from the dominion of the Catholic church?
3. Why does a Christian perform good works, according to Luther? What kind of a religious experience does this conception presuppose? Does everyone have this kind of an experience? What is the Catholic judgment on Luther's theory of morality?
4. How did Luther expect Christians to find out what they ought to do? Compare his plan with that of Catholicism. How did Luther's position enable him to abolish such Catholic practices as fasting, saint-worship, penance, and the like? Compare Luther's principle of morality with that of Jesus. Can love be depended upon always to suggest the right thing? Does a loving mother ever "spoil" her child? Might Christian love be sentimental rather than wise?
5. Does an "orthodox" man usually feel morally superior to a man who holds "unorthodox" views? Does he feel that he has a right to condemn such persons? What gives him the right to do so? Does orthodoxy furnish any temptation to become "self-righteous"?
6. How may the Christian know what he ought to do, according to Calvinism? Compare this with the Lutheran conception; with the Catholic conception. Did Calvinism attempt to interfere in politics? Name some historical instances. Lutheranism adopted the motto, *Cuius regio ejus religio*

("The religion of the ruler must be the religion of the people"). Contrast this principle with the attitude of John Knox who refused to submit to the religious ideas of his sovereign, Mary Queen of Scots. What gave a Calvinist a right to oppose a ruler?

7. What is a theocracy? How did Calvinism attempt to maintain a theocracy? Why were Calvinists more strict about Sabbath-keeping than either Catholics or Lutherans?
8. Why is there such a general dislike of a "Puritan"? How do you account for the change of sentiment since the early days of New England history? State what seem to you to be the points of strength and the points of weakness in the ideal of a biblical theocracy.
9. How is the Christian to find out what he ought to do, according to Anglicanism? Compare this program with Calvinism; with Lutheranism; with Roman Catholicism.
10. Can we assume today that all citizens will be Christians? Have non-Christians rights which must be respected? Do you think that the disestablishment of the church is a moral advantage? How do you think a patriotic Jew feels when he hears the United States described as a "Christian nation"? Why cannot a nation like the United States officially sanction some specific "Christian" program? How does the establishment of a secular state affect the practicability of early Protestant ethical ideals.

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CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIAN ETHICS AS A QUEST FOR THE GOOD

Two important inquiries.—There are two essential questions which a moral person must always ask. One of these is: What is the highest good? It is extremely important to keep asking this question. The dogmatic mind may accept some conventional definition of the good and forget to ask whether the assumed "highest good" is really the highest. In particular we need to realize that when once a given doctrine of the good has been declared to be the will of God, men do not feel free to criticize it. Indeed men have sometimes believed themselves to be obeying the will of God when they had actually identified a very faulty idea of their own with the divine will.

But there is a second question equally important. It is this: Am I willing to devote myself to the highest good? To know the better but to choose the worse is no uncommon experience. Christianity has always laid primary stress upon the consecration of the individual to the will of God. One may have the attitude of moral devotion even while he is uncertain as to what the highest good is. One may be dedicated to duty without knowing precisely where duty will lead him. When this spirit of Christian devotion is linked to a dogmatic definition of the highest good, it may lead to ruthless fanaticism, if the highest good be wrongly defined. But when joined with the open-minded quest

for the truth, it is an almost irresistible constructive power.

The need of the scientific spirit in Christian ethics.—It is only by truthful and exact observation and experimentation that we can really know what is the highest good. Many moral precepts which come down to us in tradition were based on an imperfect knowledge. Only three or four centuries ago Christians believed that they ought to employ physical torture, if necessary, to induce a man to renounce a "false" belief. Happily we have learned better. The story of the behavior of Christian people at the time of the panic over witches in Salem is almost incredible today. In these, and in numberless other cases, it is imperative that the facts should be accurately known if men are really to promote the highest good. Important as it is for the Christian to seek the will of God, it is equally important for him to make sure that he correctly understands all the facts; and this understanding cannot be attained without employing the best methods of inquiry as to the highest good.

There is no short and easy way of determining moral conduct.—Anyone on reflection discovers instances in which he feels that he has not been justly treated. This often occurs when the intentions of others are good. The parent who has no inner feeling for the experiences of a child may with the best of intentions so behave as to forfeit the moral approval of the child. The employer of labor, facing the complex situation due to industrial competition on the one hand and the demands of labor organizations on the other, has no easy task to discover what is morally required of him.

It is to be feared that our usual training in Christian ethics has not made us aware of the serious character of the quest for the good life. We too easily assume that in the Bible, or at least in the teachings of Jesus, we have a ready-made code applicable to any and all circumstances. Many good Christian people are not aware that we simply do not know enough about some of the complicated questions of our day to be able to exercise moral leadership. We are constantly being urged to introduce "Christian principles" into our relationships with men; but those relationships are often so indefinite or so remote that we cannot even think seriously about them. One of the great defects in our Christian morality is the fact that it has been clearly worked out in only a very small territory of life.

The importance of an acquaintance with facts.—True wisdom comes, not from repeating principles and formulas which we have learned from some book or some master, but from a first-hand knowledge of the facts. It is comparatively easy to say that we ought to relieve destitution. But when a beggar on the street asks for money, the chances are that an unquestioning response to his request will simply reinforce his demoralization. It is not easy to know what the particular circumstances require in such a case. Moreover, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the ordinary man to find out what he needs to know. In most large cities, a central bureau of charities usually exists, which is equipped to furnish reliable information. The Christian who wishes to help the unfortunate must avail himself of those organized forms of exact knowledge which modern society has created. One of the greatest needs today is a reliable

means of finding out the facts. The sentiment of Christian people is an enormous moral force. If it could always be accompanied by knowledge, it would determine the conduct of affairs in many instances. But when such a crisis as a bitterly fought strike occurs, Christians generally are not sufficiently well-informed to be sure precisely what the application of Christian principles would require. There is altogether too much vague religious talk about the power of Christianity to solve all moral problems. But Christian solutions must be worked out by Christian people; and no one can "solve" a problem unless he knows exactly what difficulties must be overcome, and how they may best be effectually treated. The importance of precise knowledge of facts cannot be overemphasized.

The importance of a Christian valuation of facts.—Mere knowledge of facts does not necessarily lead to moral action. It may end in tables of formal statistics. It may even beget a fatalistic way of inferring from the constancy of statistical information the conclusion that human nature is so predetermined that there is no possibility of changing it. It is here that Christian experience and training render supremely important service. The Christian has learned through his relationship to Jesus and through his training in the church to love generous and humane behavior. Anything that prevents such behavior he hates. If scientific investigation discloses the cause of an evil, the Christian enters on a campaign against that cause. Important as it is that we should have exact scientific knowledge concerning human life it is even more important that there should be the purpose to use such knowledge in order that men may lead better lives.

Christian ethics as a never ceasing quest for the good.—The moral education of humanity is never finished. During the long and slow course of human history, mankind has been constantly learning. The moral ideals of one age are not good enough in all respects for a succeeding age. Formal systems serve a useful purpose in conserving and organizing whatever knowledge has been attained at the time of the system. But no system can include all the varied needs of man in his changeful history. The true moral life is in constant poise, ready not only to apply the familiar precepts, but also to discover and to meet new needs. Christian ethics, in so far as it embodies the spirit of Jesus, will be a creative attitude of moral eagerness rather than complacent conformity to a system. If duty be portrayed as that of moral exploration, we may uncover many an opportunity which would never have presented itself to us without the creative insight due to the spirit of moral quest.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are you sure that your present convictions ought all to be held? How can one find out what the highest good really is? Do you think that Christians are critical enough of their own beliefs? Does mere knowledge of the right guarantee right action? Theodore Roosevelt once characterized certain people as "parlor reformers." He referred to people who listen to "uplifting" lectures and feel that by merely listening and approving they have taken a stand for morality. What moral defect do you see in a "parlor reformer"?
2. What is the scientific spirit? Are moral precepts sometimes formulated on the basis of imperfect knowledge? Can you name any instance? As you recall your Christian training, do you feel that enough stress was laid on the necessity of critical questioning?

3. How do you think of Christian morality: as obedience or as a quest for the good? Are the two incompatible? How is a Christian parent to know how to deal with a "difficult" child? How can a Christian employer know what wages he ought to pay? Could he find out by reading his Bible?
4. Have you ever had a beggar ask you for money? What did you do? Are you sure that you did your Christian duty? Ought a Christian in Chicago to know about the Bureau of Charities? If so, why? How can a Christian determine which party he ought to support in an election? Do Christians usually have the information which they need in such cases? Could they get it by reading the Bible? How could they get it?
5. What is meant by a Christian valuation of facts? What is the difference between an accurate knowledge of the facts concerning intemperance and a Christian valuation of these facts? Does a liquor-seller know the facts? How does his valuation differ from that of a Christian?

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CHAPTER VIII

SOME FACTS OF THE MORAL LIFE

The defect of ideals not based on fact.—It is easy to turn moral thinking into a kind of pleasant day-dreaming. Many a man wants emotionally to be pure or generous, but fails to realize his desire because of difficulties which he does not seriously undertake to meet, and of which he may not be intelligently aware. Good resolutions are notoriously short lived. There are certain fundamental facts in the very structure of our daily existence which must be squarely faced if a moral resolve is to be anything more than a wistful gesture.

What is human nature?—Christian theology has sometimes defined human nature as if it were a sort of metaphysical entity identical for all men. There have been sharp disputes as to whether this human nature was "totally depraved" or not. It is well to face the facts as we see them before entering upon generalizations. It is impossible for us to get back to an "original" human nature by any process of observation. Each individual is born with certain definite aptitudes which have been inherited. But this inheritance is widely varied among men. Moreover, from the day of birth the babe is subjected to a process of education which stimulates and develops certain kinds of behavior. It is perfectly "natural" for a boy with good heredity and the influence of a refined home to have refined tastes. It is equally "natural" for the boy with an unfortunate inheritance who is thrown with vicious companions to

have depraved tastes. It is far more profitable to try to understand the specific facts in the case of each individual than to generalize about "human nature."

Human nature is plastic.—The most important aspect of human life is the large place which education has in shaping conduct. In other words, human nature can be molded. There are, indeed, certain fundamental impulses, such as the need for food, the sex interest, fear, anger, curiosity, and the like; but all of these can be trained in specific ways, and can be controlled by moral ideals. Christian doctrine and modern psychology agree that a man need not remain completely bound by his undeveloped "natural" inheritance. Under the suggestions which come from social contacts the mind of each individual is being constantly altered. Christian ethics should take account of the factors which enter into the remaking of human nature, and should set forth the duty of using all proper means for the securing of a Christian character.

What is conscience?—The word "conscience" needs careful definition. Everybody knows by experience the strong feeling that one "ought" to do certain things. But this feeling is often interpreted in so mysterious a fashion that its relation to moral behavior is not always clear. We say that a man ought always to follow his conscience. Yet we find some men who conscientiously advocate fads or prejudices plainly harmful. If we recognize the fact that conscience, like any other human capacity, is a matter of growth and education, we shall be saved from much perplexity.

How conscience is developed.—A little observation will show that conscience is the result of education, as

truly as the ability to read and write. There is, of course, a native impulse which is trained into conscientious action, just as there is a native ability which is directed into the capacity to read. But the particular direction which this original impulse to activity takes is due largely to the social experience of early years. The child from the first is made to feel that certain acts are admirable, while others are "naughty." Emotions are trained to approve some things and to disapprove others. Wherever the parents have strong feelings on a given subject, the children by social sympathy share those feelings. The child is almost always loyal to the ideals or the prejudices which prevail in the home. It is only when he begins to reason for himself that any distinction is made between what he has been taught to respect and what is actually good.

Conscientiousness and moral judgment.—It will make the nature of moral choice clearer, if we distinguish between two aspects of moral experience which are often confused, both popularly being called "conscience." The first aspect may be called conscientiousness. It is an attitude of moral loyalty. The conscientious man pledges himself to decide always in favor of what is morally better, no matter whether it inconveniences him or not. This attitude is the best possible preparation for moral thoughtfulness. But the purpose to do right does not necessarily carry with it any special insight as to what the right is, any more than a determination to learn a language guarantees that one will always speak without error.

The second factor in morality is good moral judgment. If a conscientious person is ignorant or prejudiced, his

very conscientiousness may stand in the way of the attainment of true wisdom. Moral judgment, like judgment in any realm of life, comes only through a wide experience in which different possibilities are carefully weighed. It is a mistake to suppose that "conscience" can supply intuitive knowledge. The Christian's conscience does not furnish him automatically with good judgment when the necessity for a moral choice confronts him; but it does furnish an incentive toward the acquirement of such knowledge as is indispensable.

The social character of conscience.—In a sense, conscience already exists before the individual acquires a conscience of his own. The society into which he is born has its generally accepted ideals, and its strong loyalties. It is very difficult for the individual to dissent from these current judgments. The American boy takes pride in characteristic American attitudes so naturally and so instinctively that it seems incredible to him that boys in other lands can be really loyal to a king or an emperor. Our moral life grows out of our sharing of the social conscience which we find already existing. Even when the individual dissents from conventionally accepted standards, his dissent is none the less conditioned by the social conscience. He is much more likely to win adherents to his cause if he can represent it as an improved form of what is already loved than he would be if he assumed an attitude of repudiation.

The Christian conscience.—For centuries Christian men and women have faced the problems of life and have come to certain conclusions concerning what is required of a disciple of Jesus. There is thus a Christian conscience

which has laid down definite principles of action in many realms of life. The individual acquires a Christian conscience exactly as he acquires his moral convictions in the realm of politics or of any organized interest. He shares the conversation and the activities of Christian people and acquires a deep sympathy with the ideals for which the Christian church stands. When he attains a personal religious experience he assumes a more definite responsibility for maintaining Christian ideals. It would be a mistake to suppose that he must create out of his personal experience the content of his Christian convictions. These are to a large extent already socially provided.

This social Christian conscience, like the conscience of the individual, is not fixed and infallible. It has developed through a varied history. It is always capable of being educated. In an age like ours, when public policies are decided by popular opinion, the importance of a strong Christian conscience is obvious. The peculiar danger is that this conscience shall be very sensitive concerning matters of ecclesiastical regularity, and relatively ineffective in the so-called secular realm.

The question of freedom of the will.—Treatises on ethics formerly devoted much attention to this question. But the discussions presupposed the existence of a distinct entity or "faculty" called the will. We have now come to see that human activity involves many factors. The same person may at one time be kindly and at another time be morose. What causes the difference in his conduct at the two times? A variety of answers may be given. His morose conduct may be due to an attack of indigestion. Or he may have suffered a humiliating

experience of some kind. Or he may be tired out. We never explain the reason for a man's conduct in terms of an isolated will. The practical question for ethics, therefore, is not as to the existence of a metaphysically free will. It is rather an empirical inquiry into the conditions of human behavior.

The practical meaning of freedom.—Practically freedom means the ability of a man to make a deliberate choice when confronted with two or more possible courses of action. It means that he can give good reasons why he chose the course which he took. He did not act automatically. He made sure that his action should express what he really thought to be best. Freedom thus practically means the ability to stop and deliberate before committing one's self to any particular activity. It means the capacity to bring to attention through the use of memory and imagination other satisfactions besides the one suggested by the accidental environment in which one stands.

The conditions of such freedom.—When viewed in this practical way, certain necessary conditions of freedom appear.

1. *A healthy physical and mental life.*—If a person is suffering intense pain, his thinking is inevitably held in subjection to this imperative physical need. If he is tired out, he has not the vigor demanded for serious thinking. He will almost inevitably do the easiest thing. Disease which saps one's strength, mental habits which prevent serious thinking, preoccupation with fads or prejudices, are all conditions which limit the capacity of a person to consider alternate possibilities of action. If there exist such obstacles to freedom,

they must be removed as the first step toward a moral life.

2. *A broad range of interests.*—If, in a crisis, I can think of only one thing to do, I am not free in my action. I simply have to do the thing which is in my mind. The larger the number of alternate courses which I can imagine, the greater my freedom. Many a man sinks into an easy acquiescence with debasing habits simply because he does not know of any other way of finding satisfaction. If when I meet opposition, I can think of no possible attitude save that of hostility, I shall never avail myself of the "soft answer that turneth away wrath," or labor to substitute methods of reasonable arbitration for the employment of force in cases of dispute.

This condition of freedom is especially important in dealing with temptation. If when the allurement of some harmful thing presents itself to me, I am unable to think of any alternative which would bring satisfaction, I am helpless in the power of the temptation. The mere longing for gratification will wear out my protests. Tactful parents and teachers have long since found out that the surest way of preventing a child from indulging its momentary desires is to divert the attention of the child to something else. We escape from the power of temptation by turning attention to something more worthy rather than by directly fighting the longing. The supreme importance of a broad enough range of interests to permit such substitution is evident.

3. *A capacity for intelligent valuation.*—The capacity for making good moral valuations is attained exactly as is good taste in art or in literature. The amateur

puts himself under the influence of those who are able to discern the difference between what is good and what is trivial or debasing. The education thus received is quite as much a matter of sharing the feeling of our masters as it is a matter of technical criticism. In Christian ethics the method of achieving an independent judgment is usually that of reading the Bible and sharing the ideals there presented. Most important is an aquaintance with Jesus so intimate that we may be led to love what he loved. The Christian may gradually come to have "the mind of Christ," so that his judgment in any case will be genuinely Christian. Such a method of moral valuation leaves the Christian free from the cramping conventionalism of a stereotyped code, and enables him to assume a creative attitude toward the problems of life.

What is involved in moral choice?—In the endeavor to simplify the conception of morality, choice is often depicted as if it were an arbitrary selection of one of two alternatives and the rejection of the other. As a matter of fact, the process is seldom so simple. We are confronted with a complex situation, in which several desirable things make their appeal. What we actually try to do is to secure for ourselves as large a number of good things as possible. While we may at any given moment decide to work rather than to play, we usually also determine to make a place for play somewhere in our program. The growth of the moral life is not so much a series of exclusive choices, as it is an ordering of life so as to make room for all desirable good things. Even when two alternatives seem mutually exclusive, the ingenuity of creative freedom is often such as to work out

an adjustment in which something of both alternatives is retained. Every choice is an experiment from which we learn better how to choose wisely the next time. Often moral issues are not clear cut. We have to choose the course which at the time seems to be best. But we cannot be sure it is best until we see how the choice turns out. A so-called "conflict of duties" is, when carefully analyzed, only a wealth of moral opportunities presented to a person who is not in a position to make use of them all. Alternatives are frequently set before us by zealous partisans which are not necessary alternatives at all. Sometimes a greater freedom in the exercise of moral judgment resulting from a better-developed imagination will suggest ways of readjustment which will preserve allegiance to both possibilities. For example, when a person discovers that the first chapters of Genesis are not literally in accord with modern science, he is not compelled either to accept the Bible as infallible or to throw it all away. The better moral course is to readjust one's conceptions in accordance with the facts so that one can be loyal both to the Bible and to the requirements of scientific honesty.

Moral responsibility.—The word "responsibility" indicates that a person is capable of making some sort of response to moral demands. He may be held accountable for his actions. We do not consider a person responsible if we are convinced that he cannot give that rational consideration to his conduct which we have already discussed as the essence of freedom. The insane person, the inexperienced child, the man suffering some overwhelming agony, are instances of people incapable of the deliberation which we expect in morally free persons.

We should not think of asking any of these to assume an important responsibility. But we do demand that persons in normal circumstances shall be ready to give an account of their deeds in terms of moral decision. Christian doctrine has expressed this fact of moral responsibility dramatically in its doctrine that every individual must meet God face to face and give account of his deeds. The habit of daily confession in prayer, if the confession be explicit, and not a mere form of words, is a powerful religious means of cultivating a constant sense of responsibility.

Reponsibility in relation to the social conscience.—Our earliest and our most constant experiences of responsibility are called forth by the demands of the social conscience. We are expected by parents, teachers, schoolmates, friends, to live up to the standards already accepted by the social group. The sense of responsibility is always most highly developed in such social relations. It is difficult to feel any profound moral obligation toward members of an alien or hostile group. It is here that zealous reformers often go astray. The new responsibility is often presented in terms of a hostile criticism of existing loyalties, and thus fails to engage a sympathetic hearing. The new loyalty should always include all that is worthy in the old. The discovery of responsibilities toward new groups does not release one from his responsibility toward the old. The moral task is to bring about a co-ordination of different responsibilities. This involves a criticism of existing social demands in so far as these are plainly inadequate.

The Christian test of responsibility.—The Christian is accountable to God. He is responsible for maintaining

the kind of life which is worthy of a disciple of Jesus. The Christian, therefore, can never stop with any conventionally accepted standard of responsibility. He must strive to be "perfect even as [his] Father in heaven is perfect." The Christian's good will must be as universal as that of God. He must so enlarge the boundaries of his good intentions as to embrace all human relationships. Christianity reaffirms the responsibility which men owe to family, to personal friends, to country, to vocational associates, but it insists that this responsibility shall be so broadened as to eliminate petty provincialism. One who is willing to be judged by God must show a sense of moral obligation to all of God's children.[1]

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. "We think that by feeling strongly enough about something, by wishing hard enough, we can get a desirable result, such as virtuous execution of a good resolve, or peace among nations, or good will in industry." Is this a common fault with good-intentioned people?
2. "To Aristotle slavery was rooted in aboriginal human nature." Was Aristotle right? How do you know whether he was right or not? Is craving for intoxicants "natural"? What kinds of satisfaction do you "naturally" enjoy? Does your neighbor "naturally" enjoy the same satisfactions? Can you tell whether your present tastes are due to training or to your original "nature"?
3. "You can't change human nature." Do you agree with this statement? In the Great War, peace-loving and generous boys were trained to kill their fellow-men. Was their "nature" changed? Was it changed back again after the war? What brought about the changes in both cases? Is race-prejudice "natural"? Can it be intensified by propaganda? Can it be overcome by education?

[1] Matt. 5:43–48.

4. Do conscientious people ever do wrong? "The plastic character of conscience is shown by the ease with which a person may be led to accept an irrational content as readily as one that serves the true ends of life. The most emphatic utterances of conscience in a child may, by the force of training, be connected with purely arbitrary and artificial principles." Can you recall any matters about which you were very scrupulous as a child, but which you have since come to consider of slight importance? Why did you feel as you did? Why have you changed your attitude?
5. Were the "conscientious objectors" in the Great War any more conscientious than Christians who took part in the war? How do you account for such differences of judgment among conscientious people? How may one acquire good moral judgment?
6. What is meant by a "social conscience"? A century or more ago men felt that they were in duty bound to fight duels under certain conditions. Ought Alexander Hamilton to have refused to fight a duel with Aaron Burr? Why did he feel that he ought to accept the challenge?
7. What is a "Christian conscience"? How does it differ from the conscience of a Mohammedan? How may one acquire a Christian conscience? Is a Christian conscience infallible?
8. We often ask a person, "What made you do that?" Would we be satisfied if he answered that he just willed it? Why are you not free to choose the best when you are tired out? How free is a prejudiced man? How free is an ignorant man? Can temptation be successfully resisted by simply willing not to yield?
9. In questions involving moral decision, are all the moral considerations usually on one side; or are there "two sides to every question"? Do we always choose one alternative to the entire exclusion of the other? Suppose a person who sings poorly asks you what you think of her singing; do you set the alternative: either truthfulness involving discourtesy, or courtesy involving untruthfulness? Or do you try to be *both* truthful *and* courteous? If so, do you find some sort of compromise? Is such a compromise morally defensible?

10. What is meant by moral responsibility? Do we hold a man responsible for deliberately killing another man in time of peace? Do we hold him equally responsible for the act in time of war? Why do we make the distinction? "War is murder." Does this express the exact truth? How would you revise the statement?

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The Pedagogy of Advance

CHAPTER IX

WHY DO PEOPLE DO WRONG?

The fact of sin.—The emphasis laid upon sin by Christian preachers and teachers is justified if we observe human life closely. The newspaper lays before us daily a sordid and terrible story of lust, greed, ruthless ambition, graft, commercialized vice, dishonesty, warfare, and other wrongs. These things go on in spite of the admirable theoretical discussions of moral problems. All the books on ethics in the world will not save men if their inner purposes are not right.

What is sin?—Strictly speaking there is no such thing as "sin" apart from persons who are guilty of sinning. Moreover, to call a man a sinner does not tell us much about him. It leaves us in the dark as to just what his offense is. Even if we get a man to repent of sin in general, he may never have his attention called to some particular habit which he ought to correct. Through long centuries of theological discussion the word "sin" has been overloaded with speculation until it is in danger of becoming a mere abstract term.

Why do people do wrong?—For the purposes of practical Christian living, it is much more important to ask specifically in each case of wrongdoing just what it was that led the person into sin than it is to theorize about sin in general. When once we realize the factors which enter into human conduct and see the various and subtle forces which prevent us from living at our best, we shall be in a position to plan more definitely

for the elimination or counteracting of the immediate causes of our failures.

Mere good intentions are not enough.—The old proverb says that "the road to hell is paved with good intentions." A common way of tolerantly characterizing a man's failure to accomplish any good is to say that "he meant well." Jane Addams tells us that a neighborly woman in the foreign section of Chicago offered to help a sick baby next door by offering it whiskey or gin. Her intentions were good; but what about the baby? The fanatic who urges some fad without any adequate knowledge of the real implication of what he indorses is likely to lead people astray. It is not enough to have a good purpose. One must also have good sense. Does not Christian aspiration often begin and end with a generalized glow of good feeling? Does the Christian deliberately undertake to discover just how this mystical exaltation can be definitely connected with the concrete tasks of his daily life? Jesus warned his disciples that citizenship in the Kingdom was not to be secured by fervently exclaiming "Lord! Lord!" Adequate knowledge of the conditions of moral living is as essential as is the purpose to live rightly.

The discovery of our moral failures.—Paradoxically enough it is usually the case that those who are most conscious of their sinfulness are those who have taken most seriously the obligations of the Christian life. Paul, Augustine, John Wesley, to name three outstanding Christian leaders, were all acutely conscious of their sinfulness. It is only the easy-going Christian who is satisfied with his behavior. The man who is genuinely measuring his life by the standards of Jesus

makes appalling discoveries. There is a real truth in the doctrine of original sin. Much of the wrongdoing in which we are engaged is due not so much to perverted intention on our part as it is to circumstances which are permitted to determine our behavior. A survey of some of these contributing causes of wrongdoing will help us to deal more effectively with the fact of sin.

Failure because of inexperience.—There is no way in which the experience of one generation may be transmitted to the next *as experience.* A certain amount of guidance may be expressed in rules and maxims drawn from the experience of the race. But there is no way of generating emotional reactions in advance of actual experience. And morality depends on the feeling of moral distinctions. Often we acquire the capacity to feel such distinctions only after we have already formed habits which we regret. The person who assumes a new responsibility for which he is ill prepared is likely to make serious mistakes. The young minister in his first pastorate may with the best of intentions do things which he afterward regrets. A primary moral duty is the safeguarding of the inexperienced so far as possible by enabling them to acquire the necessary experience in wholesome ways rather than through the disaster of humiliating mistakes. The "old-fashioned" method of training by requiring implicit obedience to precepts arbitrarily administered is being largely supplanted today by the better method of initiating the child into a richer experience in sympathetic association with his elders.

Failure due to ignorance.—Terrible is the remorse for avoidable evil done through ignorance. The boy who "didn't know that the gun was loaded" may just

as surely kill a companion as if he had deliberately murdered him. The physician who does not know enough to give an accurate diagnosis may leave the patient as badly off as if he had been guilty of neglect. While we cannot blame a man for unavoidable ignorance, we do recognize the harm which results from ignorance. It is the duty of every morally earnest man to make himself as wise as possible. Especially in the leaders of religious life is ignorance a moral defect which ought not to be tolerated. Scientific research and historical investigation today make available for us knowledge which previous generations could not possess. To fail to incorporate such knowledge into the equipment of a Christian leader is to defraud those who depend on him for guidance.

Failure through lack of self-control.—We are familiar with the common sins due to uncontrolled impulse. Anger, jealousy, fear, lust, avarice, cowardice, and the like are easily identified. But it is difficult for an individual to judge accurately the moral bearings of behavior which gives to him an emotional satisfaction. It is easy to explain such behavior in terms flattering to our self-esteem. Morality consists in subjecting the natural impulses to a critical scrutiny so that a reasonable program for life shall take the place of mere impulsive activity. The influence of Christian training is sufficient to call our attention to many of these traits. But modern psychology has rendered a great service in making us acquainted with certain repressed and often unnoticed factors in our consciousness. Whenever any experience evokes a strong emotion, it leaves in the pathways of our mental processes an emotional deposit

which makes itself felt whenever the circumstances connected with the original experience are repeated. There are various "complexes" which can be diagnosed by a skilled psychiatrist, and which will explain many instances of baffling behavior. A humiliating experience may induce a habit of avoiding certain contacts, and thus create a refusal frankly to face one's total environment. Evasions of various sorts leave their mark on character. In some cases the inner conflict results in serious nervous instability, carrying with it the inability to engage confidently in morally worthy enterprises. Self-control is possible only if the education and the social contacts of a person have been such as to bring out a sense of confidence in one's ability to meet responsibilities in a worthy fashion.

Failure due to physical conditions.—Our behavior is dependent not only upon our purposes but also upon our physical condition. Our plans can be carried out only as the body shall serve as the agent of our resolves. Injury to the brain causes abnormal behavior. A person suffering pain cannot be expected to give his attention to anything requiring calm and careful thought. Adenoids obstructing the breathing passages may prevent a child from obtaining the purifying oxygen needed to maintain health and the mental poise which health gives. Fatigue makes us easily irritable, readily discouraged. President King says, "No fagged man can be at his best." The close relationship between bodily health and spiritual wholesomeness is not always realized. As a part of the equipment for a Christian life we must make sure of an adequately nourished body, and the good functioning of all the physical organs. In the crowded

life of our cities this means attention to public sanitation, the problem of good housing, and the control of disease. There is thus need of the "social gospel" in addition to the gospel of individual salvation.

Failure due to social conditions.—Our conceptions of morality are inevitably derived from the social tradition in which we are educated. Our behavior ordinarily conforms to the standards approved by the people whom we trust and admire. Some of the most difficult moral problems confronting us today are set by the social tradition which we inherit and from which it is very hard to break away. Race prejudice stands in the way of Christian brotherhood. Anyone who attempts to break down the barriers insisted upon by tradition is sure to feel the weight of social disapproval. War is kept before the imagination of men largely by inherited sentiments of national loyalty nourished on the glorification of past wars. "In wine-drinking countries wine is praised in poetry and song. . . . . Until very recent years a total abstainer in middle class European society was regarded with disquietude of mind and social impatience, like a person advocating force revolution or political assassination." We are educated by assimilating the customs of the society into which we are born. Thus even when we dedicate ourselves to what seems to be right we may eventually discover ourselves to be facing in the wrong direction.

The moral life as a struggle against sin.—Such a survey of the influences which lead to moral failure make it clear that the idea of original sin contains a real truth. We all know the humiliating experience of finding that high ideals are thwarted by forces which are stronger

than a good intention. There sometimes seems to be an almost diabolical irony in the emergence of apparently trivial matters which upset moral equilibrium and deliver a person over to emotions and motives of which he is later ashamed. The language of Christian devotion involves almost wearisome repetitions of confession of sin. But the experience of a morally earnest person confirms this emphasis. A frank recognition of the causes for moral failure reveals the fact that right living is no easy matter. The lusts of the flesh and the deceitfulness of riches are as real obstacles to Christian living today as they ever were. It is always easier to fall back on the native promptings of impulse or the generally approved codes of behavior than it is to face squarely the moral question of the highest good. Christian preaching has been right in its emphasis on the reality of sin. That reality needs only to be set forth in concrete terms to be recognized as the great evil from which we need deliverance.

The broader meaning of repentance.—We of course feel remorse when the evil consequences of our deeds are brought before us. Repentance often stops with this. But the morally serious man is disturbed not only because he has done the wrong thing, but even more because he finds himself to be the kind of a person capable of doing the wrong thing. It is humiliating to be caught telling a lie; but it is even more humiliating to find that I am the kind of person whose word is not to be trusted. The "conviction of sin" which Christian doctrine has emphasized as the indispensable condition of conversion represents a profound truth. Instead of an emotional sorrow at vague and undefined sinfulness true repentance

consists in an intelligent effort to rid one's self of all the evil influences which lead to sin. Emotional regret is carried over into fruitful planning for a better life.

The need of salvation.—Christian doctrine has steadily insisted on the necessity for divine grace to assist man in his moral endeavors. The foregoing survey of the causes of wrongdoing shows how dependent the individual is on factors out of his immediate control. In order to live rightly one needs to be saved from forces which are hindering or preventing high attainments. Theologically the doctrine of saving grace has often been left in the realm of mystery. Grace has been represented as a kind of metaphysical entity exactly as sin has been abstractly defined. There is need of an interpretation of salvation which shall meet the definite causes for wrongdoing with a gospel of a definite way of release.

After having ascertained exactly why a person does not exercise self-control or does not choose the right, salvation can be interpreted in such a way as to provide the precise remedy for the situation. The gospel will then be preached much as Jesus preached it—as the good news of deliverance from very real evils through very definite means of appropriating the saving power of God. We are already coining phrases to express this larger ideal of salvation. The "gospel of good health," the "social gospel," and similar conceptions are evidence of the attempt to broaden the message of salvation so as to relate it definitely to all the experiences of men.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is there less sense of sin today than in former times? What does the word "sin" suggest to you? Observe the feeling of moral indignation aroused in you by each of the following

words: coward; sneak; forger; grafter; sinner. Which carries more moral significance, the particular or the general term?

2. If you explain your wrongdoing by reference to general sinfulness, does your explanation help you to remedy your conduct? If you explain it by saying that you were tired out at the time, does this explanation help you to remedy your conduct next time? Which is of more practical importance, a general theoretical explanation of sin or a discovery of specific reasons why men go wrong?
3. Will a good intention enable one to do right? Will a sentiment of Christian love enable one always to do right? What else is necessary?
4. Why does an inexperienced person make mistakes? "We repent in later years of sins of boyhood, which we only now see to be sins." The skilled trades require a period of apprenticeship. Why? Is there anything comparable to this in the process of acquiring moral experience? Did your Sunday-school instruction help you to acquire experience in a helpful way?
5. "Ignorance of the law excuses no man." Why? Has a physician a moral right to remain ignorant of the best medical science? Has an employer a moral right to remain ignorant of the conditions under which his employees work? Has an ignorant man a right to enter the Christian ministry? What harm does an ignorant preacher do?
6. Define "self-control." What occurs when a man "loses his temper"? What is the difference between "righteous indignation" and "getting angry"? What is a psychological "complex"? How does an "inferiority complex" influence one's behavior? What is the moral effect of a persistent evading of certain inevitable contacts?
7. Physically weak children often "cheat" in games because that is the only way in which they can ever score points. How would you go to work to stop such cheating? Has Christianity any concern for sanitation and housing in large cities? If so, why?
8. Is any living person responsible for the existence of the caste system in India? Can an Indian ignore it? Why is there a

"race problem" in the United States? Did any living person create it? Can it be evaded? Nearly everyone agrees that war is a terrible evil. Why is it not abolished when men so universally dread and hate it?

9. Which is more serious: to cheat in an examination or to be the kind of person capable of dishonesty? Which is more easily repented of? Can one experience "social repentance"? E.g., Can one repent of a war which he did not help to bring on? How does repentance express itself constructively?
10. What is meant by the phrase "salvation from sin"? Are men usually concerned to be saved from sin or from the consequences of sin? Is there any stereotyped way of salvation?

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CHAPTER X

CHRISTIAN INCENTIVES TO RIGHT LIVING

The sacramental conception of salvation.—In Roman Catholicism, and in some branches of Protestantism, the view prevails that the sacraments are indispensable to salvation; for these are the means of grace expressly appointed by Christ. Without them a genuine Christian life is held to be impossible. The emotional power of participating in the sacraments is unquestionably very great. Those who believe in them find them a most important means of reinforcing the spiritual life. But it is always possible for less seriously minded persons to think of the sacraments as possessing some magical power to secure a claim on future bliss. The sacramental theory of salvation often tends to give secondary place to the moral conditions of Christian salvation. Moreover, the relationship between sacramental salvation and right living is not self-evident. Protestantism has with varying degrees of thoroughness objected to the sacramental conception as morally inadequate.

The Protestant conception of conversion.—Evangelical Christianity substituted for the sacramental conception the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Faith is a deliberate inner attitude. It involves a moral choice. Emphasis is thus laid entirely on the inner life as the sole condition of salvation. The sacraments may be aids to this inner attitude, but cannot be substituted for it. But there was frequently carried over into the evangelical conception of the conversion experience

something of the same sentiment of mystery which attached to the sacraments. Conversion often was thought of, not so much in terms of moral attitudes as in terms of a profound and inscrutable emotional experience. The genuineness of a conversion was tested by a supposed metaphysical potency lying behind the experience rather than merely by the result in character. Conversion did not guarantee moral living any more than did sacramental regeneration.

The response which an easily suggestible person makes to an impassioned evangelistic appeal may be entirely genuine for that time and place; but it may be a response to stimuli which exist only during the revival. The large number of "backsliders" is not to be attributed altogether to the sinfulness of those who "fell from grace." It is to be explained partly by the fact that the conversion experience was treated too much in isolation from the normal conditions of life, and therefore did not possess the power to carry over into different situations. To an increasing extent the older emotional evangelism is being modified by a consideration of the principles of religious education. It is discovered that a strong sentiment of loyalty to Christ and a persistent purpose to do what is expected of a Christian may be developed just as surely by the gradual process of education as by the more dramatic experience of a spectacular conversion. Exactly as it is necessary to discover specifically why people do wrong, so it is imperative to specify precisely why they are impelled to do right.

Fear of the consequences of sin.—In its crudest form this motive is presented in terms of the picture of

eternal punishment in hell as a punishment for sin. For many Christians today, however, the conception of hell has become so vague that there is very little real incentive for moral living to be derived from it. In the broader sense of the term, however, fear of consequences is an important motive in conduct. We teach children to maintain certain habits in diet and cleanliness by instilling fear of sickness. We are all controlled in our behavior by fear of public opinion as well as fear of physical or financial or moral disaster. When a religious interpretation is given to the order of nature, the consequences of an action may be looked upon as evidences of the divine approval or disapproval. The Christian may well include fear as an incentive to conduct.

Gratitude for salvation.—Luther held that the true Christian experiences such an amazing work of grace in his heart that he is filled with gratitude and love, and is eager to give himself completely to the service of God, who has done so much for him. This sentiment of gratitude is a very common one in books of devotion. It lifts Christian conduct above all petty calculation. It makes one glad of the opportunity to do something which God wants done. But it presupposes a somewhat definite and intense kind of religious experience. But in our day we cannot assume that everyone will have so intense a religious experience as to make the feeling of abounding gratitude supreme. Many Christians today are honestly perplexed, and think of religion as a quest for God rather than as an experience of complete peace. Such persons will find the motive to Christian living in something other than the radiant and unquestioning joy which Luther emphasized.

The consciousness of a divine call.—A powerful incentive with great souls is the conviction that God has summoned them to some task to be done in his name. To feel that God has laid upon me some task to be accomplished is a powerful motive. Here emphasis is put upon God's trust in me to perform what he wants done. It is a motive which appeals to heroic souls. In our day of theological perplexity it is perhaps a stronger one with many people than is the motive of gratitude for an accomplished salvation. Indeed, as the educational conception of the way in which one becomes a Christian gains ground, the appeal to a sense of personal responsibility comes to be more and more prominent. To present to vigorous men the opportunity for Christian service in such a way as to enable them to feel the glory of being instruments in the accomplishment of something which God wants done is a kind of religious experience which is not widely enough recognized at its face value.

Love for Jesus.—Among the strongest motives in human experience is love for a person. Such love is at the same time a sentiment of gratitude for the privilege of sharing the life of the beloved and a sentiment of eagerness to do the things which will please him. It is through Jesus that the Christian comes to his religious experience. It is to Jesus that he turns for light on the pathway of life. Bearing the name of Christ, the Christian is impelled by love for Christ. Such love for Jesus leads to the never ceasing attempt to understand better his teachings and to catch the spirit of his life. It is this love for Jesus which gives to the Fourth Gospel its peculiar spiritual power. Gratitude for the experience of salvation through Jesus is one aspect of this love;

but it extends farther. It leads one not only to rejoice in what Jesus has done for him, but also in what he may do for and with Jesus.

Membership in the Christian church.—One of the strongest influences in human life is the sense of loyalty to a group. The "gang spirit" among boys, membership in a political party, in a lodge, in a professional society, are some of the familiar forms of group loyalty. It is to be feared that membership in the church has too often been prized primarily as a means of getting to heaven. The uplifting power of the consciousness of sharing in a noble work is not sufficiently emphasized. Many a Christian is temperamentally or intellectually incapable of feeling very intensely the force of the somewhat difficult theories of salvation set forth by theologians. But such persons love to feel themselves members of the goodly company of disciples of Jesus. Their religion consists largely in sharing the social mind of the church. Such devotion is capable of sustaining Christian service of the finest kind, as many a pastor knows.

The ideal of a Christian society.—It should never be forgotten that Christian faith includes not only the creation of good will in individuals, but also the belief in the Kingdom of God. The ultimate good to which the Christian looks forward is citizenship in a society where good will shall be expressed in laws and customs as well as in the minds of individuals. In our day there is an ardent proclamation of the "social gospel," which means the belief that social organizations may be "converted" no less than individuals. The part which the Christian conscience has played in the abolition of slavery, in the fight against the liquor traffic, in the education of public

sentiment in opposition to the brutality of war, is evidence of the expansive power of the religious dynamic engendered by the creation of Christian good will. Thus in addition to the motive drawn from a personal religious experience is the inspiration of the belief in the Kingdom of God. This belief leads Christian people to face the challenge of evil circumstances with the consciousness of an inspiring inheritance of hope. It makes possible such sublime faith as that expressed in the statement, "One with God is a majority."

The moral power of Christian faith.—The moral behavior of men is inspired primarily by great emotions of love or loyalty. Men want righteousness to be *interesting* as well as good. When a noble cause can appeal to a sense of romantic adventure it has enlisted a spiritual power which no amount of rational explanation can produce. Christian faith means such a romantic adventure. It boldly affirms that the supreme goal is life eternal. It interprets human conduct in terms of a divine solicitude for man's highest good. By keeping before the mind the question whether God is pleased with one's way of living, it introduces the loftiest possible significance into otherwise prosaic tasks. It is well, in conclusion, to remind ourselves of certain aspects of the Christian's religious experience which give spiritual power.

A new sense of personal dignity.—The Christian gospel affirms the infinite value of every man. In spite of sorry failures, and even in the face of depravity and sin, man is worth saving. It is true that not every Christian realizes the full possibilities of this experience. But, at its best, it gives the consciousness of being a

citizen of the Kingdom of God; and this citizenship, like citizenship in any worthy community, clothes a man with a sense of new importance. In the face of the seeming insignificance of human life, the Christian dares to live as becomes a child of God, heir to invisible glory.

The realization of divine reinforcement.—The belief that there is a moral purpose in the cosmic process makes it possible to devote one's self to a moral cause, confident that thereby one is enlisting the co-operation of God. From a practical point of view, faith is the means of "sublimating" many an impulse which otherwise finds no wholesome pathway of expression. The socializing effect of communion with God as a means of giving outlet to pent-up or concealed emotions should be more widely recognized. In prayer, one can be his honest self. Integrity of life becomes possible in this relation to One who understands as no human being understands. Such an inner unification of purpose can then be carried over into the everyday situation, enabling one to overcome in the consciousness of the new-found strength.

The privilege of bearing the name of Jesus.—The Christian is one who has gained the right to a name which arouses reverence and adoration. He is a follower, a disciple, a younger brother of Jesus. By almost common consent the ideals of Jesus are revered and trusted by all who long for righteousness. The Christian professes himself to belong to the goodly company of those who whole-heartedly love and trust Jesus. There is a great unused spiritual power in the privilege of calling one's self by that name. To be a "good minister of Jesus Christ" is a calling capable of inspiring any man to his best.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean to be "saved"? Is salvation ever conceived as something which can be attained without a moral life? In what sense does the Roman Catholic hold that the sacraments are indispensable to salvation? Are Quakers (who use no sacraments) less morally worthy than those who do use the sacraments?
2. "Each revival 'burns over the ground' so that an interval must elapse before another can arise with power." Is this a moral defect? "Conversion is continuous with religious growth in both process and content." Is this the usual conception of conversion? Why is there so much "backsliding" after a public revival?
3. How large a part does the fear of hell have in influencing Christian conduct? Does this motive lead to the highest moral conduct?
4. Is gratitude a powerful motive for generous conduct? What place did Luther make for gratitude in Christian living? Is the religious experience of everyone such that gratitude is the dominant emotion?
5. Does the sense of responsibility give moral power? Why is the captain of a wrecked ship always the last to leave? What gave to John Knox the moral courage to withstand Mary Queen of Scots, his lawful sovereign?
6. Which is the stronger motive, gratitude for personal salvation or a sense of being engaged in the work which Jesus wants done? Dr. Sheldon in his book, *In His Steps*, pictured true Christians as asking constantly "What would Jesus do?" Is this a practicable way of cultivating a Christian attitude?
7. Why do you belong to a church? How does your church help you to be at your best? What is the difference in moral effect between a sermon and a lecture? What would be the moral loss in a community if there were no churches?
8. How does the belief that the Kingdom of God is to be established bring moral power? What is meant by the phrase "Christianizing the social order"?
9. How does the experience of discipleship to Jesus create an attitude of good will? How does this experience help a Christian to discover what he ought to do?

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CHAPTER XI

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE CHURCH

The Christian church is the one organization whose sole purpose is to maintain Christian ideals. The individual Christian owes his religious and moral convictions largely to the influence of the church. He expects membership in the church to enlighten him as to his duty and to strengthen him to fulfil his duty. The wholesomeness and effectiveness of Christian living in other realms is dependent largely on a wholesome relationship to the church. If loyalty to the church be lacking, the life of a Christian is seriously impaired.

The service rendered by the church.—(1) The church acquaints men with the gospel. While occasionally an individual may attain a Christian life through isolated reading and reflection without any definite contact with the church, such an experience is rare. Normally, it is through the church that one is brought face to face with God and made to realize his responsibilities in terms of God's will.

2. The church enables the individual to become a member of a group definitely dedicated to Christian living. It, of course, must be recognized that not every church lives up to this ideal. With all its faults, however, the church professes to require of all its members a kind of life which Christ approves.

3. The church unwaveringly proclaims a faith in a better life for the individual and a better world in which he may live. It is true that this faith is often com-

promised by circumstances. But the church refuses ultimately to regard man as a helpless product of biological or social forces. It treats a man as a child of God, and assumes that with God's help he can to some degree express his divine inheritance. It proclaims the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and encourages its members to hope and strive for the coming of that Kingdom.

The duty of loyalty to the church.—In Catholicism, it is taken for granted that every Christian will be absolutely loyal to the church. In belief, in conduct, in ways of thinking, the guidance of the church is to be unquestioningly accepted. Such loyalty is identified with loyalty to Jesus Christ; for according to the Catholic theory, the church was officially established by Christ to exercise divine guidance. The Protestant cannot give his conscience into the keeping of the church. His loyalty, therefore, is not so simple as assent without assuming responsibility for that to which he assents. He is in duty bound to test the standards of the church by what he believes to be Christian ideals.

What does the Christian owe to the church?—The Christian owes it to his church to lead a worthy Christian life. In Protestantism, responsibility for this is left with the individual. Adverse criticism of the church is due largely to the unworthy lives of church members. There is no moral dignity in a life of indifference and neglect which only in time of stress turns to the church for "salvation." It is to the glory of the church that unselfish solicitude for even unworthy souls is constantly exercised. But one who has the spirit of Jesus will seek to help the church as truly as he will seek to be helped by it.

Loyalty will also express itself in the eager desire to correct any faults which the church may possess, so that the church may be Christian in fact as well as in name. While a "high" church may rest on its official credentials, the very life of a Protestant church depends on the voluntary love and confidence of the community in which it exists. The primary duty of a Christian is to endeavor to make his church so evident a home of Christian love and service that it will be gratefully welcomed in the community where it is located.

The value of a historical view of the church.—The church, like any other organization, preserves and hands down from one generation to the next the deposit of a long social history. Inevitably this social inheritance preserves some items derived from an almost forgotten past. Doubtless a body of Christians organizing *de novo* today would never think of some of the "essentials" of the traditional organization if these were not suggested by long-continued habit. A moral problem is caused by some of these "essentials." The church may use an ancient creed which does not adequately express modern faith, or which may even include statements open to serious objection when critically examined. Rituals may be actually "strange" to anyone not familiar with them. The official declarations of the church may seem to lay great stress on matters which have long since ceased to have any vital significance. High-church conceptions of the validity of the Christian ministry stand in the way of Christian unity. The sanctity of forms of worship prevents that democratic interchange of thought and aspiration indispensable to a living religion.

If we are to judge fairly, it is necessary to have an appreciation of the historical process by which these forms and creeds came to be part and parcel of the church life. Usually, when we can trace a church practice back to its origin, we find that it is an expression of a positive and eager desire for noble Christian living. The particular circumstances connected with its origin gave to it its peculiar form. But the form should not prevent us from realizing its spiritual purpose.

The moral aspects of religious belief.—There are two aspects of the belief of the individual which must be considered. In the first place one's belief must be an expression of loyalty to the church to which he belongs. It gains much of its significance from the fact that he is confessing a faith common to his fellow-Christians. But, on the other hand, the individual must feel that what he professes to believe is *true*. Otherwise there would be introduced into the very center of his spiritual life an element of hypocrisy. The ideal situation would be a profession of faith in which a person confesses at the same time his sense of fellowship with his fellow-Christians and also expresses his personal convictions. The difficulty of securing such a profession acceptable to everybody is obvious.

The high-church conception of "the faith."—It is widely believed that the content of Christian doctrine, in its essentials, was once for all proclaimed by Jesus Christ, and that all disciples of Jesus are in duty bound to hold and defend the faith which he inculcated. According to this view any wilful departure from this authoritative faith is to be regarded as sin; for it implies a rejection of the guidance of Christ. This conception

of faith engenders a fine spirit of loyalty. But it meets with serious difficulties which cannot be overlooked. It is questionable whether there is real historical evidence that the content of faith was so definitely formulated from the beginning. There have always been differences of opinion in the Christian community. If it be assumed that there is only one valid system of belief, the church holding that system will be faced with perpetual warfare against honest dissenters. To apply the test of conformity to a creed would include those who take their confession lightly and would exclude many who are more concerned to be inwardly honest than to be conventionally correct.

How did "the faith" arise?—Religious experience always precedes formulations of that experience. The first Christians had no New Testament. They were working out their problems of belief and conduct under the inspiration of their immediate sense of discipleship to Jesus. They were not sure about some things. They had serious differences of opinion on important matters. It required some three centuries of discussion to prepare for the Nicene definition of the nature of Christ. Differences of opinion as to the adequacy and the meaning of the Nicene Creed continued for centuries—indeed, have continued to this day. Doctrine has never been a fixed and final thing in the life of the church. There is a real history of Christian thinking. The historical understanding of the rise and development of Christian belief makes it clear that theological doctrines are never so finally formulated that they may not be revised. Indeed, a living faith finds a way of revising them, either by new formulas or by new interpretations of the old.

The liturgical use of creeds.—In some churches the recital of a creed is a part of the regular confession of faith. Often a conscientious person finds himself in a real difficulty. He hesitates to say that he believes what he really does not believe; but he also hesitates to set himself in opposition to the customs of the church which he loves and of which he wishes to be a loyal member. With the growing historical spirit of our day, it is increasingly recognized that the creeds are most truthfully understood if they are regarded as symbols of a larger and more vital faith rather than as statements restricting the thinking of men. No creed states all that is involved in living faith. One can heartily reverence the purpose of a creed and sympathize with the faith which it faultily expresses even when one frankly recognizes that he would not choose that particular form to express his own personal faith. When an ancient creed is thus used as a social means of expressing a common devotion, it enables living men to feel their responsibility for the wholesome continuation of a great religious tradition. It is only when a formal creed is so used as to coerce the conscience of the individual that it is morally objectionable. A better historical knowledge of the origin and the meaning of creeds would preclude the dogmatic use of them. As symbols of social aspiration they are of great value. As fetters put upon the thinking of the individual they are intolerable. Unfortunately, the creeds most in use are found to consist almost exclusively of doctrinal statements. They are seriously defective in moral content. This, however, is largely made good in the liturgical prayers.

The Christian testing of doctrine.—There are many considerations which must be taken into account in the

testing of belief. But there is one searching test which should never be omitted. The Christian must ask if the holding and defense of the doctrine which he affirms makes for a more Christlike spirit in his life. An undoubtedly true doctrine may be employed in an un-Christlike way. Bigots remain bigots even if they utter true doctrines. On the other hand, there are persons whose theological views seem to us to be absurd, but who put us to shame by their unselfish spirit of Christian love. The orthodox man who would apply ecclesiastical pressure in order to secure uniformity of belief, and the enthusiastic liberal who ridicules what seems to him to be credulity both forget that good will is the Christian test of doctrine. No one is a better Christian for being unwillingly coerced into acquiescence. While each individual will, of course, testify gladly to the power of his own honest beliefs, he will, if he possess the spirit of a disciple of Jesus, also ask whether the way in which he holds and maintains his doctrines makes him a better Christian and challenges those who differ from him to make the same test.

The Christian test of worship.—The Christian test of worship, like the Christian test of doctrine, leads one to ask whether attendance at the service of worship makes one more Christlike in attitude and behavior. Jesus suggested this test when he bade one who had brought a gift to the altar to ask himself whether he was still unreconciled to a fellow-man. If he was maintaining an unloving spirit toward his brother, he must leave his gift, and first go and be reconciled. Worship should be used to reinforce Christian behavior, not as a substitute for such behavior.

The influence of worship is very great. When one is a member of a worshiping group, one feels himself to be in the solemn presence of God. One comes under the influence of a social mind dedicated to the best. One's sense of religious need is deepened. One is encouraged to live for an hour at his best in the company of others, who also are aspiring to live at their best. If only care be taken to correlate the exaltation which comes from worship with the circumstances of everyday life, the Christian may carry over from the church service an extraordinary reinforcement of his moral purpose.

Sunday and Sabbath observance.—In countries which have been strongly influenced by Calvinism, great stress has been laid on the strict observance of Sunday as a day holy to the Lord, on the theory that this meant keeping the fourth commandment. There is, however, no evidence that the Sabbath legislation of the Old Testament was ever intended to apply to the first day of the week. The Christian test should be applied to the use of Sunday. Fortunately we have very plain indications of Jesus' own attitude toward a formal observance of the Sabbath. "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." Sunday should be so observed as to make men more Christlike in spirit. The services of worship in the church are, of course, of primary importance. But it is quite contrary to the spirit of Christian living to suppose that there is anything meritorious about church-going apart from the spiritual inspiration and moral strengthening that may be thus attained. Non-ecclesiastical culture interests and wholesome recreation have also their rightful place

in the Christian observance of Sunday. The Christian young man who takes a group of boys for a hike on Sunday afternoon may be rendering a service which could be given in no other way so effectively. Music, art, good reading, neighborly visiting, community meetings, and the like may all serve to reinforce Christian attitudes.

One of the great evils of our day is the commercialization of Sunday. Thousands of young people on their one free day in the week are allured to spend money and time in so-called recreation resorts planned almost solely for the financial gain of the owners. The natural desire for pleasure is deliberately exploited for the sake of financial gain. No finer Christian service could be rendered than to plan for the recreation of youth on Sunday in ways which should have reference primarily to uplifting results in character. Another evil, which fortunately has aroused the Christian conscience, is the industrial slavery which compels men to work seven days in the week. Christian sentiment will not only insist on the elimination of unnecessary work on Sunday; it will also help to provide abundant opportunities for the cultivation of the higher life.

The problem of church unity.—The moral waste of divisions in Christendom is self-evident. We are coming to see the absurdity of a denominational rivalry which plants in a town a dozen struggling inefficient churches in the place of one or two well-equipped churches with strong leaders. The desire for Christian unity is a welcome expression of a genuinely Christian spirit. But when the attempt is made to put into practice this sentiment, it is discovered that the Catholic conception of

church loyalty still casts its shadow over Protestantism. That conception brands dissent as sin. There is only one way, according to Catholic policy, in which Christendom can be reunited. That way prescribes that all branches of Christendom, except Catholicism, shall repent of the sin of heresy or schism, and shall docilely return to the "true" fold. A Protestant denomination generally feels that the "distinctive doctrines" of the denomination must be expressly affirmed in any union program. The proposal to replace our present denominational situation with organic church unity thus meets with almost insuperable difficulties.

The primary necessity for honoring church loyalty.—Existing denominations arose out of a profound stirring of Christian conscience. It would be morally incredible that Lutherans should ever repent of Luther's attitude toward the Roman Catholic church, or that Methodists should ever become apologetic in their attitude toward John Wesley. If organic church unity is ever to be attained, it must be by a policy of including these loyalties in a larger unity. But so long as any of them are regarded as "heresies," such a policy of inclusion is out of the question.

The growing spirit of church co-operation.—The desire for Christian unity is finding practical expression in the idea of interdenominational co-operation which leaves each body entirely free to determine its own beliefs and polity. In the present state of Christian sentiment, when differences of conviction on doctrinal questions are so great, it would seem that the spirit of Christlikeness is likely to be better promoted by practical co-operation in tasks on which all can agree than in the

attempt to secure unity in doctrine or organization under one form of ecclesiastical polity.

The relation of the church to the state.—There have been three distinct attitudes toward the state assumed in different stages of the history of Christianity. The early Christians, as we have seen, believed that existing political organizations would speedily be done away with. There was no thought of trying to make the state an instrument of Christianity.

Later when Christianity became the one official religion of the Empire, the question arose as to how church and state should be related to each other. In theory, each had its divinely appointed field; but in practice these fields often overlapped, and a contest for authority resulted. The church held that the state ought to promote and uphold the Christianizing of the world. It ought to punish heretics, stamp out schismatic movements, and enact into law Christian conceptions.

The third attitude is made necessary by the secularization of modern politics. In America the separation of church and state is a part of the fundamental law. Church members have no exclusive rights before the law. This means an abandonment of the medieval position. It is questionable whether the common phrase "a Christian nation" can fitly be applied to a country where Jews and non-Christians have equal rights with church members. The church in America must think of itself as a voluntary organization, protected, like any other legitimate organization, by the laws of the land, but with no superior claims on the government due simply to the fact that it bears the name "Christian." As an organization it ought to influence public opinion in the direction

of supporting enterprises which make for better standards of living; but it will advocate these, not because they are technically "Christian," but rather because their inherent moral and social value is so evident that Christian people, dedicated to the good, will rejoice with all right-minded people in their establishment.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Suppose all preaching should be done away with, what difference do you think it would make in the morality of men?
2. Are Catholics usually more loyal to their church than Protestants are to theirs? Why is there so much disparagement of the church today? What are the adverse criticisms which you most frequently hear? What is the difference between "knocking" the church and constructive criticism of the church?
3. What is the difference between a belief and an opinion? Which can be more readily changed? Why? What is meant by the phrase "to take a thing on faith"? Would this phrase adequately express the way in which we hold our religious beliefs? Distinguish between the personal faith of a Christian and a creed used by his church. Do the two always coincide?
4. Can any existing branch of Christianity rightfully claim to possess *the* truth? If so, on what grounds? Do you think that the moral life of a Christian can be adequately measured by ascertaining his attitude toward the Apostles' Creed? What is a heretic? Heretics were formerly severely punished. Why? What happens to a heretic in the United States? How do you account for the change of attitude?
5. The Nicene Creed was adopted in 325 A.D. How did Christians know what they ought to believe before the Nicene Creed was promulgated? How does the historian explain the origin of a creed? Has Christian belief actually remained unchanged through the centuries? Do you hold the same beliefs as your grandfather did? Is it your Christian duty to believe as he did?

6. Does your church include a creed as part of the ritual? Do you like to repeat it? Why? What would be your feeling toward a friend who objected to repeating it? Do you prefer an ancient creed or a modern formula for liturgical purposes?
7. Is it possible to affirm a Christian doctrine in an un-Christian spirit? Do "strict" parents and pastors ever create a prejudice against church doctrines and practices? "I had doctrine crammed down my throat when I was a child, and I resolved that when I grew up I would never have anything to do with the church." What was wrong with the situation which created such a revolt?
8. What is a sabbatarian? Are Sabbath and Sunday the same? Formerly libraries, art galleries, and baseball grounds were closed on Sunday. Now they are frequently open. Which policy do you approve? Why? Are commercialized amusements more harmful on Sunday than on any other day? Why do the churches oppose unnecessary labor on Sunday?
9. If a town were already amply supplied with Protestant churches would a Catholic think there ought to be a Catholic church there also? Why? Would a Methodist think there ought to be a Methodist church? If so, why? Which is better in a town of 2,000 population, seven weak churches or two strong ones? Does denominationalism in your own town make for a strong type of Christianity?
10. Contrast the idea of federation or of co-operation with that of organic church unity. Which seems to you to permit the freer exercise of loyalty? Which puts most emphasis on practical morality?
11. What was the relation between the church and the state in the Middle Ages? What is an "established church"? Why is there no established church in the United States? Is disestablishment a moral gain or a moral loss? In what ways may the church in the United States legitimately exercise an influence in politics?

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NOTE.—Movements which have seriously organized for the promotion of steps toward Christian unity are: (1) The World Conference on Faith and Order, organized in 1910 by the Protestant Episcopal church of America. It has carried on a very extensive program of literature and conferences, and has arranged for a great conference to be held in Washington in 1925 to consider the reasons which now keep denominations apart, and to propose, if possible, a common platform for a united church. (2) The Lambeth proposals, which represent the overtures made by the bishops of the Anglican church. The so-called "Lambeth Quadrilateral" specifies as essentials of a united Christendom: the authority of the Scriptures; the Apostles' and the Nicene creeds; the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper; and the historic episcopate. Recent movements have been in the direction of a more generous recognition of the value of non-Episcopal ordination. (3) The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, which enables churches to co-operate in social enterprises without raising questions of doctrine or polity.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

The primary importance of the family.—The family is the most inevitable social group. Human beings normally pass their infancy in the care of parents, and learn from them characteristic attitudes toward life. As children grow up, and parents grow older, there is a remarkable series of changed attitudes on the part of both parents and children. In almost no other relationship is there such necessity for constant readjustments. Familiarity and intimacy make possible an extraordinary frankness in family relations, so that questions may be discussed with a minimum of formality. For these reasons the family is the most important realm of social education. Where family life is happy, the members are admirably prepared to assume wholesome relations with other people. Where the family life is unhappy, the enforced intimacy of the members makes for nervous tension and abnormal social attitudes. The importance of safeguarding the family is recognized by all who are interested in the welfare of humanity.

The family is not exclusively a Christian institution.—The family exists in non-Christian lands as well as in Christendom. It antedates Christianity. It is the outcome of a long period of social evolution. In all cases it represents the outcome of social experiment. While we may learn from the history of the family some fundamental facts which must underlie any ethical

conception of family life, it is also true that the period of experimentation is not entirely in the past.

It needs only a superficial observation of modern life to see that we are today in the midst of a somewhat rapid evolution of feeling and thinking concerning the family. The distressing prevalence of divorce is an expression of maladjustment. Parents today face the disappearance of that attitude of docile obedience which formerly marked the behavior of children. If we recognize that the life of the family must inevitably change as the conditions of life in general change, we shall be prepared to face the facts rather than to insist on some unyielding theory. The Christian ideal is concerned with the establishment of wholesome personal relationships rather than with abstract theories.

Sex attraction and marriage.—Biologically, the continuance of the human race depends on the union of two parents of opposite sex. The sex instinct is one of the most powerful passions in human experience. Its very strength creates a serious moral problem. If it is permitted to find unbridled expression the direst evils result. Decency, honor, regard for others, may all be overwhelmed by the onrush of this terrible physical urge. Some of the vilest forms of degradation are due to the satisfaction of the sex impulse without any moral control. From the earliest days of Christianity down to the present, Christians have been warned in the most solemn fashion not to yield to the lure of uncontrolled lust. Marriage is the way in which sex attraction is so ennobled and morally controlled that it contributes to an ideal life. In Christian interpretations, marriage involves such a glorifying of the love of man for woman that it is

the basis for the highest kind of generous living. Mere sex attraction must be supplemented by the sober purpose to be faithful to each other during life, and to make of this life-union the basis for a constantly growing experience of joint responsibilities. The religious celebration of marriage is the fitting expression of this lofty ideal.

The sacramental conception of marriage.—In the Roman Catholic church, marriage is held to be a sacrament imparting to the contracting parties a supernatural grace. The high purpose of this religious interpretation of marriage is evident. The sacramental theory, however, presupposes that there can be no perfect marriage without the sacrament. But this presupposition is contrary to fact. There are plenty of genuine marriages, morally irreproachable, which have not been sacramentally celebrated. On the other hand, the mere fact that a union of two persons has been ecclesiastically declared does not guarantee a happy outcome, if the personal and moral factors be lacking. This Catholic conception of marriage has influenced Protestant thinking, even though Protestantism repudiated the sacramental theory. It is generally felt that there is something sacred about the marriage ceremony as such, and much discussion of the problem of divorce is more concerned to preserve the imagined sanctity of the ceremony than to get at the real root of the difficulty.

The Protestant conception of marriage.—In repudiating the sacramental theory of marriage, Protestantism took a long step toward a revaluation of marriage on the basis of facts. Emphasis was laid on the existence of genuine love and a mutual purpose to live together permanently in the enjoyment of this love and in the joint

assumption of certain responsibilities. But there was a persistence of the feeling that ecclesiastical regulation was essential. Recourse was had to the Scriptures in order to discover the divine pattern for the family life. The subordination of the wife to the husband was preserved in the form of marriage ceremony. It was difficult to get rid entirely of the many "impediments" which Roman Catholic practice had set up in the form of ecclesiastical affinities (e.g., ineligibility of god-parents). In the consideration of divorce, the attempt has usually been made to discover some technical "scriptural" rule. So long as the all-important thing about marriage is felt to be the ecclesiastical regulation of it, Christianity will be exalting formal aspects of the matter at the expense of moral considerations. This is not to be understood as a depreciation of the importance of church weddings. It is rather a plea that the church's interpretation should not emphasize incidentals above essentials.

The Christian test of marriage.—The primary reason for marriage is the romantic experience of sex attraction. Marriage must therefore be based on genuine personal love between the contracting parties. Moreover, while the theory of the indissolubility of marriage has usually been derived from the sacramental nature of the ceremony, this theory does embody an all-important principle. The love which brings together two persons in marriage should be so profound that both ardently long for a permanent union. A true marriage is one in which the lovers are sure that they will always remain lovers. The idea of "trial marriages" is contradictory to the very sentiments of true love. If any trial at all is to be made, it would be better for the lovers to try the experi-

ment of getting along without each other. If they can be satisfied to do this, they surely would not want to risk marriage on such doubtful grounds. It is this inner conviction that the lovers will always be true to each other, will always prefer each other to any other persons, will always want to share life together, which differentiates marriage from those temporary alliances which degrade and debauch. The sex impulse is subordinated to moral control only when it is accompanied by such personal regard for the loved one and such a reverence for the personal dignity of both parties that it takes its place in the larger and more comprehensive life of mutual regard. The Christian test of Christlikeness can be applied to this larger devotion. It could scarcely be applied to any ephemeral sex attraction.

The need of a common moral purpose.—It is characteristic of merely physical sex attraction that it is strongly emotional, but notoriously fickle. This is one of the evils of an unrestrained indulgence in love on its physical side. The permanence of a marriage must be based on a moral purpose as well as on personal love. The Christian ceremony pledges the lovers to certain mutual duties "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer." Sooner or later the idealistic glamor with which the lover surrounds his beloved will give way to actual facts. No one is absolutely perfect. Marriage is not only the consummation of a period of courtship; it is also a venture into a new kind of life. There are undoubted risks. There is inevitable disillusionment. It is only as the lovers shall undertake morally each to help the other to live at his or her best that the experiment can be carried on without sore trials. Too frequently

the importance of this is not realized. The husband may neglect to share with his wife that knowledge concerning the family income which alone can enable her to assume a responsible share for wise expenditure. The wife may have or acquire culture interests in which the husband has little or no part. The Christian ideal of marriage, of course, takes it for granted that both husband and wife will be active members of a Christian church, obtaining thus the constant stimulus of religious devotion to enable them worthily to face their common responsibilities. The celebration of the wedding in the church is a powerful reinforcement of the highest interpretation of the meaning of marriage. The Christian minister who performs a ceremony has an opportunity to bring into prominence precisely that moral glorification of true love which is essential to a happy union.

Parenthood.—Normally marriage means the establishment of a family into which children come. The love which bound together the lovers then finds a new and wonderful expansion in parental love. The presence of children in the home furnishes the best opportunity for the exercise of that common moral purpose which is essential to the permanence of married felicity. The experience of parenthood is a potent means of creating public sentiment for better physical and social conditions. The desire to enable one's own children to live the best life leads to the establishment of many educational and recreational advantages which might otherwise have been neglected.

Birth-control.—Christian love requires that children shall be welcome in the home. It is true that each newborn babe evokes such a wealth of parental affection that

the welcome is normally provided by natural instincts. But the Christian duty of parents involves something more than mere affection. It includes the recognition of the rights of a child to such physical and educational advantages as will enable him to realize his best capacities. Social workers are keenly aware of the inevitable degradation in too large families with insufficient income.

There is rapidly coming into existence a new code of morals in this respect. This new code is likely to be greatly reinforced within the next century or two by the increase of the world's population to a point where food supply comes to be a serious problem. Thoughtful people are already convinced that genuine Christian solicitude for humanity will lead to a rational control of the birth-rate. Such an attitude should have its effect in two important directions. On the one hand, ways must be found of restraining the improvident and defective from bringing into existence children who cannot have a good physical inheritance or humane care. On the other hand, those who are abundantly able, physically and financially, to give to children a good home ought to take their responsibilities in this matter more seriously. It has been difficult in the past to speak frankly, because the whole subject has been connected with social and ecclesiastical taboos. But the study of genetics has put us in possession of facts unknown two or three generations ago. It is the plain duty of a Christian society to see that those entering into the married state possess and use the important knowledge as to the conditions under which children may be well born and well cared for during their infancy. The fact that scientific knowledge may be used for wrong purposes is

no argument for suppressing it. The obviously moral pathway is to convey that knowledge as part and parcel of a high-minded conception of the meaning and value of human life.

The problem of divorce.—Christian doctrine, in its exaltation of the sanctity of marriage, has taken a severely rigid position in the matter of divorce. Undoubtedly this traditional Christian doctrine is a strong bulwark against the notions of ill-balanced individualists who have small concern for the social consequences of philandering. At the same time, the current sentiment in Christian teaching is based, either consciously or subconsciously, on the retention of the sacramental conception of marriage. It is usually taken for granted that the preservation of the marriage contract is always morally better than its dissolution. The one "scriptural" occasion for divorce is commonly recognized; but other equally disastrous circumstances are not permitted to receive as frank consideration. When, for any reason, there has disappeared beyond recall that mutual love which the Christian recognizes as the one sacred reason for marriage, it is impossible longer to speak of the "sanctity" of a loveless intimacy. A Christian minister would certainly advise against the marriage of people who did not love each other. Shall he insist on the continuance of a marriage where love does not and cannot exist?

In this, as in all moral problems, the Christian ideal must be determined by personal rather than technical considerations. Many a marriage has survived the alleged "scriptural" cause for divorce, simply because there was sufficient Christian love remaining to make

forgiveness and reconciliation possible. There are countless instances where Christian devotion has eventually saved what seemed at the time to be hopeless estrangement from leading to an irrevocable separation. The Christian sentiment against divorce is based on the wholesome recognition of the fact that a happy marriage is not simply a matter of sentiment, but also of continuous moral co-operation. Nevertheless, with the best of intentions, mistakes are made in marriage. Protestantism has generally taken the ground that the best Christian service is to be rendered by frankly recognizing the facts. That divorce actually relieves an intolerable situation in some instances is undeniable. But for those selfishly sought separations which are desired solely for irresponsible individualistic gratification the Christian can have only condemnation. And the Christian minister may well hesitate to remarry anyone who has shown himself to be devoid of moral earnestness in his first alliance.

The religious responsibility of parents.—In former days the father of a Christian family was expected to maintain in the home regular religious exercises. The reading of the Bible, followed by family prayers, was a daily occurrence. The children were expected to attend church regularly, and to be able to discuss with the parents the religious truths there learned. The lasting influence of this distinctly religious training is gratefully acknowledged by countless men and women now in the prime of life. But the modern home has usually abandoned the formal practices of a former generation. This is partly due to the fact that the varied occupations of members of a family make much more difficult than formerly a unified family program; but it is also due

to the fact that many a young father today would feel ill at ease and artificial in an attempt to conduct family devotions. For the most part, the religious education of children is being turned over to the Sunday school. Christian parents, however, cannot evade their duty. They should show as much interest in the new methods of religious training as their parents or grandparents did in the older methods. They ought to share with their children the experiences of the Sunday school. They ought, unless prevented by clear duties elsewhere, themselves to be identified with the Sunday school, either as teachers or as learners. They ought to engage in frank and friendly conversation about Christian ideals, so that the children may know how deeply concerned the parents are for the prevalence of Christlike conduct and purposes. The rewards of such sharing of religious education with one's children are great. Where it is lacking, either through carelessness, or through false modesty, both children and parents are being deprived of a precious experience.

There is one subject on which information should be given to the child by a parent. This is the knowledge of the way in which children come into the world. Children invariably ask about these matters at an early age, before they have any particular sex-consciousness. It is possible then to answer these questions frankly and reverently, in such a way that the child's first knowledge of sex relations shall be wholesome. To permit this knowledge to be first acquired from the lips of evil-minded or flippant persons is a wrong which no parent should allow.

The Christian home as a social asset.—In former times the members of the family were engaged in a

common industrial enterprise. All had a hand in providing food, clothing, tools, furniture, works of art. The home under these circumstances was a most important realm of co-operation. But today the industries have almost all disappeared from the home. The members of the family pursue their daily work away from home, meeting perhaps only at dinner as a family circle. It is very easy, under these circumstances, to permit the family to disintegrate. Home then comes to be only a common roof to shelter heterogeneous individuals. The Christian family today must seriously plan to create and foster a common social life. There can be a wealth of culture when each one of the various members of the circle contributes to an interested and sympathetic group the story of the human contacts, the struggles and aspirations, and the reflections which grow out of work or companionship. The Christian virtue of brotherliness can most readily and naturally grow in the home circle. Personal love and pride make easy a generous appreciation of the efforts of others. This brotherhood is readily enlarged as the friends of one or another member of the family are welcomed to the good cheer of a Christian home. Many a lonesome young person away from his own home might be spiritually enriched by the atmosphere of a Christian home which extends a genuine welcome. The importance of such homes as centers of generous and unselfish ideals can scarcely be overestimated.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is the family so important a social group? Can you think of any other group in which such frank personal relationships exist? Which are more important in making a "happy" family, exact definitions of the status and authority of the

members, or personal qualities? In what respects are the ideals of Christian living patterned after the relationships in the family?

2. Are we prepared today to say exactly how parental "authority" should be defined and exercised? What changes have recently occurred in the conception of the rights of a wife? Should a bride promise to obey her husband?
3. How does marriage ennoble sex attraction? Why is mere romantic love not a sufficient basis for a happy marriage? How would you define the moral purpose which should be present in a true marriage?
4. In what way does the sacramental theory exalt marriage? Is marriage a sacrament in Protestantism? Are Protestant marriages less "sacred" than Catholic marriages? What is the moral difference between a true marriage and a temporary alliance?
5. Is the wife usually intrusted with as much responsibility for family finances as she would welcome? Does the modern family take sufficient pains to have common interests? Why are such common interests essential? How does common membership in a church help to make a happy marriage?
6. How do children evoke self-sacrifice and generosity from parents? Are fathers and mothers usually more kindly than those who have no children? In what ways do children furnish compulsory education of parents? Does such education make for better character?
7. What is meant by "the right of a child to be well-born"? Do children in a large family with insufficient income seem to you to be getting their rights? What responsibility does the ideal of birth-control place upon parents? Is this ideal compatible with a Christian purpose?
8. Why is divorce usually regarded as a disgrace? Are the reasons usually given for divorce Christian reasons? Why should people not be as free to divorce as they are to marry? What would a Christian regard as a sufficient reason for divorce?
9. Were family prayers customary in your home? Why has family worship so largely disappeared? Are parents fulfilling

their religious duty to their children if they send them to Sunday school? What else should a Christian parent do?

10. The old-time authority of parents is today "split up among the teacher, truant officer, priest, judge, factory inspector, play leader, shop foreman, or union business agent." What is the moral effect of this on home life? What moral advantage comes from a home industry in which parents and children can work together? How do modern industrial and social practices threaten the integrity of the home? In what ways is a Christian home a social asset?

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CHAPTER XIII

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS LIFE-WORK

The moral value of work.—We inherit an aristocratic sentiment concerning work, derived from ancient class distinctions. The "gentleman" until comparatively recent times was a man who did not have to work for a living. The laborer, especially the manual laborer, was patronized because people needed his services, but he was not recognized as eligible to the privileges of the leisure class. A social stigma was thus placed on labor. In America the conditions of pioneer life were such that strenuous labor on the part of everyone was a self-evident good. Thus in the development of this country it has come to be taken for granted that an able-bodied man will want to have some definite profession or occupation. Christianity began as a religion of working people, and it has always recognized the full dignity of the worker. Christian ethics presupposes that every moral individual will wish to be engaged in useful occupation.

Work creates a new world.—Man transforms his world through work. Our great cities, our industries, our transportation systems, our specialized education and amusements, are all the result of work. To an increasing extent the "world" in which we live is largely man-made. Our spiritual values must be found largely in this world. This fact gives rise to the characteristic moral problems of today. The "labor problem" is not simply the technical one of adjusting wages. It is rather the more complicated question of moral responsi-

bilities in a work-created world. How are the goods produced by human labor to be so distributed and so used as to promote the higher life of men?

The Christian conception of vocation.—There is all the difference in the world between "hunting a job" and "choosing a vocation." In the former case, the work which one does is primarily a mere means of securing wages. Any other "job" paying equally good wages would be as good. But in a vocation the primary reward is found in the opportunity to do something worth while. A certain university professor, when pitied for the smallness of his salary, replied: "If I were able, I should be glad to pay for the privilege of doing what the university employs me to do." The "dignity of labor" can be maintained only if the laborer can experience an inherent value in his labor. So far as possible, Christian ethics must help men to think of their life-work in terms of vocation. This involves both the cultivation of an inner attitude and the serious attempt so to organize the world of industry as to make work interesting and rewarding.

Distinctively religious vocations.—The Roman Catholic church provides certain ways of dedicating one's life entirely to religious activities. The monk or the nun withdraws from ordinary occupations so as to be free to devote all time and energy to the perfection of character and the service of men in religious ways. The spiritual value of such dedication is apparent; but it also brings its characteristic temptations. If the religious life is too completely separated from normal occupations, faithfulness engenders a kind of intensity and persistence in acts of worship, prayer, and meditation, which may on

the one hand easily lead to morbid states of mind, or on the other to a careless familiarity with constantly repeated forms. In Protestantism there is no specific calling which is in and of itself peculiarly religious. A Christian purpose may be expressed in any occupation which is worthy of one's capacities and which is so ordered as to keep foremost the ideal of service to one's fellow-men.

The ideal of Christian ministry.—The word "minister" has been monopolized by the clergy. But in the literal sense of the word, every true Christian is a minister. Jesus made ministry the supreme test of greatness in his Kingdom. Martin Luther suggested to house servants that they could give a genuinely Christian character to their humble duties if they were to remember that they were cleaning the house or cooking the meals for people whom the Lord Jesus loved. The Christian will, of course, be honest and faithful in his daily toil. But he will also bring to it that inner experience of good will which expresses itself in friendly attitudes and kindly intentions in all relations with others. There is nothing more valuable than precisely this spiritualizing of what might otherwise be somewhat sordid relationships.

The ministry of religious leadership.—This vocation is rightly highly honored. For that reason it is often coveted by sentimental persons who have no particular gifts for the task. There is no reason to think that a weak or ignorant man is rendering better Christian service in the ministry than he would be elsewhere. On the contrary, so important is the task of leadership, so dependent on the leader are the rank and file of Chris-

tians, that one contemplating the Christian ministry should ask himself in all seriousness whether in character and in education he is worthy of the trust committed to him. Just as we should never for a moment think of intrusting our physical welfare to an incompetent physician, so our spiritual welfare can be promoted only by a minister who is really equipped for his task. Mere sentimental consecration cannot take the place of knowledge and good judgment.

The Christian leader's vocation is to help the spiritual life of those who look to him for leadership. He must so identify himself with the people whom he is to serve that he will not find himself in the unfortunate position of scolding or lecturing a group entirely out of sympathy with him. It is his privilege to make men acquainted with the many-sided inheritance of our Christian tradition so as to reveal the un-Christian character of dogmatism. The well-trained minister, who can thus open for the present generation the book of remembrance where during the centuries devoted men and women have given their testimony, will enable the modern Christian to face our world with freedom while at the same time preserving continuity with the past.

The Christian teacher.—The ministry of the teacher consists in introducing immature persons to the treasures of human culture in such fashion as to enable them to become bearers of culture to their own and to succeeding generations. The teacher, no less than the preacher, should experience a "call." He (or she) must have such a personal love for the culture which is to be interpreted that teaching will be a joy. If the teacher has degraded the task into a "job" where the routine is carried out in

order to claim a money reward, irreparable harm is done. Pupils catch the spirit of the teacher and retain its influence longer than anything else. Great emphasis is laid on the duty and the opportunity of teachers in Christian schools to lead the students into a religious life. It is not always recognized that the finest service which a teacher can render is to kindle a genuine love for the things which elevate and inspire, whether these things are conventionally labeled or not. A truly Christian influence may be exercised in secular schools as well as in specifically Christian schools, without ever formally discussing religion at all. If the pupil, by whatever means, be led to love and to covet for himself a Christlike attitude in his relations with the problems and the tasks of life, the Christian teacher has been faithful.

In our day teachers are often faced with one difficult problem. Modern science and historical criticism have corrected many ideas formerly held sacred. The teacher is pledged to seek and to proclaim the truth. The conclusions reached in geology, biology, and history may be contradictory to certain views which some of the pupils regard as essential to religious faith. The Christian teacher will avoid dogmatizing in such a way as to seem to coerce the consciences of others. He will take the utmost pains to acquaint the pupils with the facts on which conclusions rest so that these conclusions may seem to be reasonable. He will refrain from that species of intellectual cruelty in which brutal men find joy—the deliberate shocking and wounding of sentiment under the delusion that emancipation is better achieved thus than by more reasonable methods. The Christian

teacher will, in cases where painful anxiety arises, take pains to point out ways in which the new science may be religiously interpreted. A great service is rendered by a teacher who can instil open-mindedness along with a warm devotion to religious ideals. If more teachers took advantage of this opportunity, many a high-minded young man or woman might be enlisted heartily in Christian living, instead of wandering in perplexity.

The Christian physician.—The close relation between physical health and mental health gives to the physician an enviable opportunity to contribute toward the Christian living of his patients. The standards of the medical profession presuppose that the physician will minister to the needs of men instead of exploiting them. This is essentially in harmony with the Christian ideal. The physician is in a position to know some personal secrets which are never disclosed to others. He may often be able, as no one else is, to discover factors which interfere not only with physical welfare, but also with moral integrity. The Christian physician may most effectually preach the gospel of clean living without using cant phrases or seeming to be unduly pious. The provision for hospitals, the administration of public health, the education of parents to the right of children to be well-born, the understanding of the relationship between physical health and normal appetites and desires, the discovery of the cause and cure of occupational diseases, are some of the enterprises in which physicians must exercise leadership. So prominent is the ideal of ministry in the code of the physician that it may almost be said that his vocational standing may be measured largely in terms of the Christian ideal.

The Christian lawyer.—As civilization becomes more complex the function of law becomes more complicated. Our modern culture would speedily collapse if there were not some way of enabling right-minded people to know the rules of the game. The lawyer is called upon to help men either to keep out of trouble or to find the best way out of trouble if they have been so foolish or so unfortunate as to have violated the laws. The Christian ideal of ministry is immediately applicable here. The lawyer is trusted by his client as a friend in need. The gospel of good will can be practiced as an essential factor in the lawyer's professional work.

The temptation confronting the lawyer is to let personal favoritism have full sway, so that the interests of the client are ruthlessly forwarded. The Christian lawyer will attempt to make the law further social good will instead of defeating it. He will assist the client to an attitude of fair-mindedness, so that justice may be done. The Christian lawyer, both in his private practice and in his professional relations, has an extraordinary opportunity to uphold high standards, and to help create the conditions which are indispensable if respect for the law is to prevail.

Christian ministry in the realm of industry.—In the so-called professions, the ideal of ministry is frankly recognized. The "successful" minister or teacher or physician is the man who has rendered largest service because of his special equipment and his interest in human welfare. One can enjoy a high reputation, even if he never becomes rich in his profession. But in the realm of industry, "success" is generally identified with ability to "make money." The Christian business man is thus

compelled to live in a world where competition is not so much for professional reputation as it is for a large income. Moreover, in the complicated web of modern industry, personal relations are to a large extent eliminated. The manufacturer does not meet personally the people who eventually consume his goods. The salesman perforce estimates his task in terms of the amount of sales rather than in terms of the welfare of those to whom he sells. The laborer toils under contract or in factories, where he is almost never compelled to think of the persons who will be affected by the quality of his work.

The Christian business man is therefore confronted with an exceptionally difficult situation. The very impersonal nature of business enterprise largely excludes that direct contact with persons which makes it relatively easy for the minister or teacher or physician to incorporate Christian good will directly and profitably into the code of the profession. When such good will is incorporated into industrial enterprises, it is likely to be so absorbed into the routine of trade that the "ultimate consumer" does not realize that there has been any such contribution.

But the very impersonal nature of the intricate organization of business opens the door to a moral opportunity of great importance. Men can be protected from exploitation only if the system of business shall be morally just. The greatest contribution which can be rendered by those who are in a position to shape business practices is to make the system increasingly one under which men are required to render good value in services or in goods in all transactions. Christianity means the practice of good will. But good will in industrial or

commercial relations is impossible unless the transactions are carried on under regulations which all may respect and trust. So long as the suspicion exists that exploitation is tolerated, if not encouraged, by business standards, it will be very difficult to carry Christian relationships into the industrial realm.

The moral problem of uncongenial tasks.—Comparatively few persons actually realize the ideal of having freely chosen a vocation. A large portion of the labor essential to human welfare is monotonous and often deadening. But even drudgery is gladly undertaken when it can serve a loved one. The mother is often tied down to an unrelenting routine of housework, cooking, sewing, nursing, watching, and disciplining the children. But the weary mother is upheld by the realization that her ministry is indispensable to the welfare of those whom she loves. In the monotonous toil of our highly specialized industry, there is no such immediate personal motive to give to work a spiritual value. Yet all such work is indispensable to humanity. There is need of a social vision which shall explicitly correlate the efforts of the toiling millions with the ends which are served by such toil. During the Great War, the soldiers who were compelled to endure almost unbelievable discomforts were constantly made aware that a grateful country was dependent on their loyalty and fidelity. A system of education was devised and carried out for the express purpose of giving moral value to the life of the soldier. When an enterprise is conceived nobly by those who administer it, idealism may be stimulated in all who have a share in the enterprise. Thus we are led back again to the primary vocation of

Christian men in industry, viz., to organize the system so that the ideal of ministry may prevail throughout.

The value of an avocation.—Where it is difficult to translate one's daily toil into the conception of a vocation, there is still the possibility of an avocation in which noble aspirations may flourish. An avocation possesses precisely that element of free choice which enters into a vocation. If vocational value cannot be realized in one's daily occupation, an avocation is imperative. Such an avocation may be the rare privilege which too many fathers neglect—the sharing of life with one's children, and the rediscovery of the educational significance of study and play. It may take the form of some sort of active service in a public or a private enterprise for the welfare of man. It may be some form of creative art or some minor undertaking in business or politics. It is imperative, however, that there shall be some phase of life which can be dedicated to the Christian ideal of ministry, if Christian faith and love are to be cultivated. Sometimes an avocation may grow to be one's real vocation. The Christian will endeavor, either by a social interpretation of the place of his work in the total welfare of man, or by the discovery of an avocation, or by both, to cultivate and establish that attitude of good will which redeems industrial life from sordidness and cynicism.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do people generally like to work? Is it an advantage or a disadvantage to be compelled to "work for a living"? What kind of work do you enjoy? Why do you enjoy it? Would you work if you did not have to? Why? Why was a "gentleman" formerly not expected to work? What has become of the "gentleman" in American life?

2. What end is a man seeking when he is "hunting a job"? What end is a man seeking if he is "choosing a life-work"? Is a "job" a moral asset or a liability? What is usually meant by a "good job"? Define "vocation." Do you think of your life-work as a vocation?
3. What is a "religious vocation" in Catholicism? What makes a vocation religious, according to Protestant standards?
4. It is expected that a man who desires to become a Christian minister must have a "divine call." What is involved in such a "call?" Make out a list of the characteristics which you would like your pastor to possess, and arrange them in order of importance.
5. Is teaching a vocation or a "job"? Can religion be "taught"? How would the work of a *Christian* teacher differ from that of a teacher who is not a Christian? The teaching of religion is usually forbidden in the public schools. Can a teacher in such schools fulfil his obligations as a Christian? What religious problems are raised by the study of modern science? Is there an irreligious way of teaching science? How can a Christian teacher of science help the religious life of his students?
6. Physicians "have attainments in special knowledge, and have as a vocation the application of this knowledge for the benefit of others. Reward or financial gain is, as a general rule, a subordinate consideration." Compare this ideal with that of the Christian minister. Why are "medical missions" deemed an essential part of the missionary enterprise? Is it easy for a physician to carry Christian principles into his practice?
7. "The primary duty of a lawyer engaged in public prosecution is not to convict, but to see that justice is done" (Canons of Ethics adopted by the American Bar Association). Does the client usually take as high-minded a view? Ought a Christian to respect the law? To what extent is good will among men dependent upon an administration of law which deserves respect? How would you define the duties of a Christian lawyer?
8. What constitutes a "successful" business man? Compare the standards of success here with the standards of success in the

ministry, or the medical profession. What is the motive which usually leads a man to choose a business career? Is it a Christian motive? What is a "businesslike method" of carrying out an enterprise? Is such a method morally superior to "unbusinesslike methods"? Are churches usually businesslike in their financial transactions? Are the customers in a department store as conscientious as the managers? In selling a business, "good will" is usually reckoned at a definite financial value. Is good will essential to a "good" business?

9. What is drudgery? How is it different from hard work? A somewhat famous sermon a generation ago bore the title, "Blessed Be Drudgery." Under what circumstances can drudgery be blessed? "Money wouldn't hire me to work in that factory." What is wrong when such a statement is made? How would you carry Christian ideals into monotonous labor?

10. What is an avocation? How may an avocation help to create moral idealism? Is Christian service most conspicuously expressed in vocations or in avocations?

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CHAPTER XIV

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD RECREATION

The distrust of worldliness.—The New Testament constantly warns against yielding to worldliness. Asceticism is an exaggerated form of this aloofness from the world. The philosophy of asceticism is simple. Men are led into selfish indulgence because of natural instincts. The ascetic undertakes a rigorous discipline of natural impulses, thinking thereby to free himself from the temptations due to the flesh. Asceticism still has an honored place in Roman Catholicism. In some Protestant bodies a quasi-ascetic theory of morals has prevailed. Puritanism has the reputation of distrusting "doubtful amusements."

There is an element of truth in ascetic conceptions. There are certain kinds of enjoyment in which the Christian may not indulge. But asceticism as such is not a Christian ideal. It is more emphasized in some non-Christian religions than in Christianity.

The demoralizing consequences of seeking nothing but pleasure.—Pleasure comes from allowing the natural impulses to have right of way. But when these impulses are indulged without restraint, they usually require a steadily increasing stimulus in order to produce satisfaction. Thus sheer indulgence of the appetites almost inevitably develops into excess. A man may become a "slave to his appetites." Moreover, a wholesome mind is thinking not so much of pleasure itself as of activities and achievements. Pleasure is a by-product rather than

a primary aim. Strictly speaking, we seek objects and situations which arouse pleasurable sentiments rather than mere pleasure.

Christianity is a religion of joy.—The literature of Christianity abounds in the expression of happiness. The gospel is the "good tidings of great joy." Christians are urged to "rejoice in the Lord." The fruit of the spirit is "love, joy, peace," and the like. The true Christian is a happy person. Nothing could be farther from the truth than to suppose that in becoming a Christian one must give up all happiness.

What brings happiness to a person.—The experience of happiness is dependent to a large extent upon character and training. We "learn to like" a great many things. The right-minded man is surely quite as happy as is the debauchee; but he is happy in a different way. The all-important moral question is not simply whether one is happy, but rather what kind of things make one happy. The Christian test of pleasure is to be found by asking whether the activities which bring enjoyment are compatible with a Christlike attitude.

The joy of wholesome work.—The happiest persons are not those who live in idleness. They are rather those who are devoted to interesting activity. Most people want to work if only the work can be of such a character as to enable them to develop and express their ideals. We have already discussed the Christian's attitude toward his life-work and have indicated the ways in which the sense of a vocation may make that work a source of satisfaction.

The consequences of fatigue.—Physiologically, happiness depends upon the wholesome and vigorous function-

ing of the physical organism. In long-continued labor chemical changes take place which affect bodily and mental health. After a prolonged period of concentrated work there is a physiological need of rest and a psychical need of recreation. Such recreation should not be looked upon as a concession to frivolous desires. It should be regarded as a necessary preparation for efficient moral living. Vacations, sports, and amusements are now generally included as essential elements in any well-regulated life. More and more attention is being given to the skilful conduct of forms of recreation. The Christian will definitely plan recreational activities as a means of keeping his life happy and wholesome.

The problem of commercialized amusements.—One of the striking developments in modern life is the promotion of expensive and elaborate opportunities for fun and recreation. Theaters, amusement parks, skating rinks, dance halls, and the like abound. These enterprises are planned with considerable ingenuity, and they provide an elaborate variety of amusement. But they exist in most cases for the primary purpose of bringing in large profits to the owners and managers. Often they seek to furnish "thrills" by enabling individuals to enjoy the excitement of an adventurous experience. In many instances the adventure takes the form of leading those in search of recreation to pass more or less beyond the line of good breeding and propriety. There are so many coarse-minded persons who are perfectly willing to pay for doubtful and spicy situations that such entertainments are commercially profitable.

What kind of recreation may the Christian seek?—If we have in mind the reasons why people do wrong, it

will be evident that the Christian should avoid those kinds of recreation which bring into prominence situations occasioning wrongdoing. Physical health is essential to good moral character. The Christian, therefore, will avoid forms of dissipation which undermine his health. Lack of self-control is a potent source of wrongdoing. The Christian will avoid such stimulations as lead to a lack of nervous balance or which encourage undue excitement. If these and similar cautions are observed, the Christian may find wholesome recreation in virtually all the current forms of respectable amusement. It has proved to be impossible to make a definite list of things from which the Christian must abstain. While it is questionable whether most offerings of the theater are worth the price, yet Christians today generally regard the theater as a desirable element in our culture. Dancing is a natural and satisfying form of rhythmic exercise that is finding a constructive place in the educational program of youth. To suppose that games played with cards are inherently any worse than those played with marbles or checkers is absurd. The problem of amusements cannot be solved by any short and easy method of making lists. A conscientious Christian will soon know whether a given type of recreation has good results on the whole. If life is growing sweeter and more generous, if the recreation finds a positive place along with Christian ideals, the most important test has been made.

The acquirement of self-reliance in recreation.—Perhaps the greatest moral defect in commercialized amusements is the fact that no initiative need be taken by the person to be amused. The very best kind of

recreation is that in which a person may be conscious of voluntary effort. Athletic sports and games of skill are especially valuable in this respect because of the desire to improve over one's past performances or to stand well among one's comrades. Of even greater importance are activities which require teamwork and promote comradeship. Amateur baseball, amateur dramatics, hiking, and camping parties are instances of this social type of recreation. These not only furnish happiness; they also encourage the practice of good will.

The increasing importance of recreation in modern life.—To an unfortunate extent the work of the modern world involves long-continued monotonous labor and confinement within doors. The human organism has been developed in relation to out-of-doors occupations. It becomes physiologically desirable to supplement the kind of labor in which people are typically engaged today with some form of agreeable physical exercise. Many Christian churches are giving specific attention to courses in physical culture. It is to be expected that Christians will make an appropriate place for this, both in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Quite as important is the need of mental recreation. The specialization of modern industry requires concentration upon some one narrow realm. If we compare the educational value of the work of a factory hand with that of a farmer's boy the differences are very great. The farmer's boy comes into contact with a surprisingly large number of industrial processes. He learns something about the life and habits of animals and birds. He is able to watch the process of producing goods from the beginning to the time when the goods are sold. The factory

hand, on the contrary, has no such opportunity for broad and varying contacts. It is essential to a wholesome life that one should have agreeable opportunities for discovering what it means to be a citizen of the larger world.

A civilization which requires people in their work and in their homes to relinquish desirable contacts with nature and with social life is under moral obligation to furnish ways in which brighter scenes and more uplifting ideals may be contemplated. A growing form of social service is the organization and guidance of groups which shall provide both for recreational social life and for the enlargement of ideas and ideals.

The play problem in cities.—It is one of the sad conditions of modern civilization that thousands of city children have no playground save the hard and dirty streets with the constant perils due to traffic. It is generally recognized today that all cities should provide ample parks for recreation. But such parks as a rule serve the needs only of older people. It has been found by experience that children under ten years of age do not go very far from home for their play. One of the enterprises where Christian sentiment may be active is the matter of providing adequate play space for the children in our towns and cities.

Of even more moral importance is the problem of suitable places where young people may meet and enjoy themselves. The public dance halls, for commercial purposes, have often exploited this need of youth. When one beholds church buildings closed for a large portion of the week one wonders whether an active Christian imagination might not discover a way of meeting a great

problem by providing rooms and halls in which youth might cultivate social life and find wholesome recreation.

The temptation of excessive excitement.—Much of the joy in recreation comes from the thrill of adventure. Play is essentially a release of energy in whole-hearted fashion. But the pleasure derived from sport can be intensified by artificial means. One of the evils connected with sport comes from introducing artificial means of increasing excitement. The thrill caused by competition can be intensified by betting on the result. Such betting may readily become gambling. The gambler, however, has lost interest in the primary values of sport. He uses uncertain events simply as opportunities for a wager. The evil of the gambling appetite is too well recognized to require specific condemnation. The Christian will, of course, keep sports "clean." It is a moral tragedy to permit wholesome recreation to become tributary to the depraved desire for gaming. Other forms of unwholesome excitement which the Christian will seek to eliminate are the use of stimulants and drugs and sensational or "spicy" plays. In all these the emotions are intensely aroused without being related to any wholesome moral activity. The consequence is nervous exhaustion rather than recreation.

The value of social forms of recreation.—The aim of Christian growth is the creating of a spirit of good will toward others. Wholesome recreation provides an especially favorable means of developing this good will. A group of people who go on a hike together will come to feel a kind of friendliness which can come in no other way so quickly and so easily. Of special value are those "old-fashioned" games which involve active co-operation

of a large number of people. Promoters of popular recreation are to a large extent using some of the games which were developed by small communities in the past, and which embody the spirit of jovial neighborliness. A more ambitious form of this social co-operation may be worked out in pageants or amateur dramatics in which the performers and the auditors are brought together in a common social enjoyment. Inasmuch as people in quest of recreation naturally feel in good humor, social forms of recreation are the easy and valuable means of creating and maintaining that spirit of good will which the Christian attempts to carry into all relations. People who have played together will have a kindly spirit, and will readily be more friendly in their industrial or social relationships.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the traits of a "worldly" person? Why has "worldliness" been condemned by Christian preachers? What is asceticism? What virtues would an ascetic place first?
2. Do people who have nothing to do except to "have a good time" seem to you to be happier than those who have to work? It has been said that "to get happiness one must forget it." In what sense is this true?
3. Are Christians usually happy? Why is it so often assumed that one must "give up" important pleasures in order to become a Christian?
4. What are the things which give you the most pleasure? Do you "naturally" like these things; or did you learn to like some of them? What would be a Christian test of pleasure?
5. Do you like the work which you have to do? If so, why? If not, why not? "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Why? "Fatigue is, therefore, not merely physically uncomfortable; it is intellectually and morally dangerous, and it makes temptations possible that have cost many a man his

character." How may the evils of fatigue be overcome? Is a vacation a moral necessity? What good does a vacation do one?

6. What is dissipation? How does it differ from amusement? What are "commercialized amusements"? What amusements of this kind are there in your home town? Do you think the amusements thus provided are really satisfactory? Half a century ago many Christians felt that it was wrong to go to a circus. Would you feel that way? How do you account for the change of sentiment? Would it perplex you to see your pastor attending a circus?
7. Is dancing inherently wrong? What has given public dance halls a bad name? What kind of theatrical performances are given in your home town? Would attendance at these tend to create a more wholesome attitude toward life? How may a Christian determine whether he should go to the theater or not?
8. In a list of recreations made by experts, out-of-door games like golf or tennis stood highest in value, and motion pictures stood lowest. Would you agree with this valuation? "The stupid experiment of organizing work and failing to organize play has, of course, brought about a fine revenge. The love of pleasure will not be denied, and when it has turned into all sorts of malignant and vicious appetites, then we, the middle aged, grow quite distracted and resort to all sorts of restrictive measures." Why is the demand for recreation so much more imperative in the city than in the country?
9. What is meant by the phrase "a sporting man"? What evils are generally connected with sports? Why is it important that "professionalism" shall be kept out of college athletics? What is the harm in betting on games? How can sports be kept "clean"?
10. What kind of moral discipline is promoted by participation in a baseball game? What is the value of "teamwork"? Is good will promoted by hiking or camping or playing together? Should such forms of recreation have a place in the program of a Christian church?

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CHAPTER XV

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS POSSESSIONS

The moral danger arising from wealth.—Christian teaching has from the very first warned men against the seductive power of riches. Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. It is easy to see why such unfavorable judgments are passed on the possession of riches. Those who have an abundance of this world's goods are likely to find their satisfactions in material comforts; and the indulgence in such comforts inevitably begets selfishness. Those who are poorer are often looked down upon with an attitude of benevolent patronage. If riches be made the supreme end of life, vulgarity is almost inevitable. If a person is so dependent on material possessions for his happiness that he stakes all on acquiring a competence, he inevitably puts the interests of the Kingdom in the second place.

The moral value of ownership.—If, however, we attempt to imagine a régime in which private property should be abolished, we immediately discover certain values in personal ownership. It is a source of profound satisfaction to be able to use one's own tools, to read one's own books, to live in one's own house. Moreover, ownership brings a sense of responsibility which it is difficult to secure in any other way. One will take much better care of a house which he owns than he will of a house which he rents. A person really cares for his own property. He is likely to exploit what is not his.

At the same time, not all wealth passes into private hands. The public needs require community ownership of highways, public buildings, parks, and the like. Private property is always subject to the public welfare. The state may "condemn" property needed for public purposes if the owner is unwilling to sell. The moral right of ownership is thus conditioned on the general welfare.

How is ownership secured?—In the early stages of human development, the "law of the jungle" often prevails. Desirable resources are seized by those who are strong enough to take and hold them. The periods of exploration and discovery have been times when individuals by the sheer fact of prior occupation claimed ownership to land. But property does not remain in the hands of those who first acquire it. It is transferred sooner or later to other hands. Much of it is inherited. Thus in the course of time some property-owners enjoy the exclusive use of their possessions without having done anything to deserve this reward. A question which should receive more attention than is usually given to it is the moral right of a person to property which he inherits, and which thus comes to him as a form of good luck. In addition to inheritance, various elements of good and bad fortune play their part in the acquiring of possessions. The mere fact of legal ownership does not guarantee that the owner has a moral right to what he possesses, in the sense that he has done something to deserve it.

The traditional Christian doctrine of stewardship.—During the Middle Ages the Christian use of property was formulated in the doctrine of stewardship. It was

believed that when God originally created the world there was no such thing as private property. Resources were free to all mankind as the air is today. If mankind had not sinned, that ideal state of primitive communism would have continued. But after the fall of man, selfishness made its appearance. Some individuals attempted to seize and monopolize the resources which ought to belong to all. The institution of private property with its system of legal protection was held to be divinely instituted in order to prevent selfishness from destroying mankind.

According to this medieval theory those who owned property were to remember that their possession rested upon a divine ordinance. They were, therefore, under obligation to administer their property, knowing that they must give account of their stewardship to God. Now God originally intended that all men should enjoy the earth and its fruits. Those who have property, therefore, should be eager to give to those who are in want. Charity was a primary virtue; it was an attempt to introduce into the present inequalities of society something of the universal justice embodied in God's original creation. The place which charity has had in the list of Christian virtues is very conspicuous.

The moral limitations of the conception of stewardship.—The conception which has just been expounded rests on the presupposition that one's possessions are due to a providential dispensation. But as a matter of fact, this is a very artificial way of interpreting the matter. We inevitably think of the human and technical factors in the acquiring of wealth. The mere fact that a man is rich cannot be taken without further question as

evidence of special divine favor. If he has obtained his wealth by extortion, or sharp dealing, or speculation, he can scarcely make good his moral defects by merely giving away part of his possessions in charity. Nor is society content to leave property rights to the religious consciousness of the individual. Searching questions are being asked about the man-made rules under which property may be acquired and held. The presuppositions of the doctrine of stewardship are too theoretical to carry much moral force.

The doctrine of tithing.—A prevalent form of the ideal of stewardship is the doctrine of tithing. This is doubtless of value in suggesting that the Christian is under obligation to make some conscientious and generous disposal of at least a part of what he possesses. But the distinction between one-tenth given to the Lord and nine-tenths reserved for private use is one which can scarcely be carried out satisfactorily. Consider what tithing would involve in the case of the father of a large family whose income is two thousand dollars, as compared with what it would involve in the case of a bachelor whose income is two hundred thousand. The two hundred dollars given by the first would represent a heroic degree of sacrifice and devotion, while the twenty thousand dollars of the wealthy bachelor would scarcely be missed.

There is no finally determined doctrine of property.—Sensitiveness to property rights leads men to attribute a sanctity to those regulations which are in their favor. But the history of human development indicates that property regulations are the result of experiment and evolution. The Christian ought to be prepared to contemplate changes in existing standards which will

actually make for a higher degree of human welfare. In our own day the enormous inequalities in personal possessions are compelling people to ask serious questions concerning the moral adequacy of our present system of property rights. It is probable that there will be a growing tendency to place definite restrictions on private ownership. Wherever such ownership is so used as to lay unjust tribute on the public, modifications are sure to be demanded.

Who owns the natural resources?—Ultimately all wealth is derived from natural resources either in the form of raw materials or through the transformation of these materials into serviceable products. The natural resources of a country—its coal, its timber, its water power, and the like—are indispensable to the welfare of inhabitants. The "law of the jungle" has determined the ownership of many of these natural resources. So strong is the feeling that property rights are sacred that any proposal to take these rights out of private hands and to administer them for the public is sure to meet with vigorous objection. At the same time the question continues to be asked with increasing insistence: "Who owns the natural resources of the earth?" What moral right has any one individual or any small group of individuals to levy tribute on others because of an alleged private possession of resources which the individual did not create?

The relationship between property and productive labor.—Most of the possessions of our modern world are due to productive labor. In simple cases, as when a man raises a crop, it is easy to see the relationship between such labor and possession. But in our modern life many of the most important forms of property

are due to the working of a complex system of co-operative investment and production. Instead of owning a factory, an individual owns a share in a corporation. Just what moral rights and duties are connected with the share of stock which he possesses? If he is thinking of it purely as a means of increasing his personal wealth, his influence is entirely on the side of exploitation. A Christian conscience must insist that ownership shall mean the purpose so to use the possession that mankind shall be the better and not the worse because of it. Ideally, an investment should be made as a personal stake of the individual in some service which can be rendered to humanity by the enterprise in which he invests.

The growth of new responsibility.—One of the significant traits of modern life is the increasing number of successful business men who are courageously working out Christian ideals in the matter of personal possessions. Many men of means devote their best energies to the administration and promotion of philanthropic enterprises. An increasing number of significant experiments are being made in the administration of property in such fashion as to make of an industry a co-operative community promoting what are virtually Christian ideals. The story of Arthur Nash, who determined to apply the Golden Rule in his business and who met with unexpected business success, is one of the fascinating stories of modern life. The traditional ideal of charity is being rapidly transformed in our day into the conception of such an administration and use of possessions as will promote that spirit of mutual trust and co-operation toward which Christianity has always looked.

A more equitable distribution of wealth.—The Christian property-owner realizes the benefits which come from ownership. The Christian spirit leads to the desire that as many persons as possible shall enjoy this enrichment of life. This ideal occasionally finds expression in the conviction that some form of collective ownership should supplant the present system. The difficulties in the way of an effective administration of a socialistic régime are formidable; and it has yet to be demonstrated that the abolition of private property would establish better motives in human behavior. But the Christian will have small patience with those who extol the advantages of private ownership, but steadily plan to keep that ownership in the hands of a very few. It cannot be denied that the possession of property gives power to the possessor. And when power is monopolized by the few, it is exceedingly difficult for the many to obtain their rights. A broader and more equitable distribution of wealth will be insisted on by the Christian conscience. But the Christian ideal cannot be identified with any particular scheme. It is of more importance to encourage all experiments looking to the establishment of more just conditions.

Some Christian uses of property.—The conception of stewardship should be broadened to mean that whatever possessions a Christian may control must be so used as to promote good will among men. The Christian will heartily support those enterprises which make possible a better life on the part of struggling humanity. Benevolences are always imperatively needed to relieve misfortune or to help people to better conditions of living. Investments will be made by the true Christian,

not exclusively for the sake of the financial return, but quite as much for the sake of promoting some industry which enriches human life. When wealth is administered in the Christian spirit, there is little or no adverse criticism directed against the possession of wealth. If all possessions were thus administered, much of the bitter hostility to the rich would disappear.

The moral obligation of making a budget.—The Christian use of possessions involves careful thought. The careless spending of money is almost inevitably without moral value. But such ill-considered expenditure is fatally easy unless one is fortified against it by some definite sense of obligation. Every Christian ought to make some kind of a budget to regulate his expenditures. He should thoughtfully determine just what are the objects for which he should plan, and definitely formulate his obligations to these. He can thus be sure that he will spend his money on the things which he morally approves. The economies which may be necessary will then be undertaken for the sake of loyalty to some worthy end. Otherwise they come as irksome and unwelcome incidents. If the individual has a surplus, the making of a budget will give opportunity for genuinely Christian planning as to the disposal of that surplus.

Intangible possessions.—Some of the most precious possessions are in the spiritual realm. There are some things that riches cannot buy—an honorable name, friends, culture, character. These can be earned only by moral and spiritual qualifications. While some individuals are naturally endowed with greater gifts in this realm than others, it is possible for all to strive to

attain them. The traditional Christian depreciation of riches is really the obverse side of an exaltation of those treasures which riches cannot buy. The true Christian can gain joy and satisfaction in life, even if he does not command those material possessions which are commonly supposed to be essential to success. The latter belong to the "things that perish," while spiritual possessions are eternal in value.

The social conception of the use of possessions.—Whether the Christian's possessions be material or spiritual, he will so use them as to make possible the sharing of benefits by as many people as possible. In the case of material possessions, charity has been the usual way of sharing with others. But the virtue of such charity depends on the spirit in which it is given. "The gift without the giver is bare." Inasmuch as in our complex civilization the income which makes possible material possessions is almost inevitably secured through the co-operation of many persons in industry, socially minded persons are more concerned to reorganize industry so as to give to all concerned a real share in constructive enterprises than they are to continue indefinitely a plan of temporary relief through charity. The finest possible use of material possessions is to promote experiments toward industrial co-operation, in the hope of establishing a real fellowship among those whose efforts are essential to the creation of a better world.

The sharing of intangible possessions is less complicated. For the most part it consists in straightforward Christian behavior toward others. A cheery disposition helps everybody to feel more kindly. Knowl-

edge can be generously shared. Skill can be put at the disposal of others. High ideals are contagious. Good will really means sharing life with others. In this day when programs and surveys are assuming so much importance, it is well to remind ourselves that the spiritual dynamic in any program must be found in the personal attitude of those who administer it. Without the desire to share ideals, the best-planned scheme is likely to fail. Where good will abounds, even badly organized social plans may be used to create neighborliness and devotion. The Christian's most important contribution to the welfare of humanity is not so much the money that he gives away or the completeness of his social program; it is rather that unfailing spirit of good will which is engendered in him by Christian discipleship, and which is indispensable to give moral value to all outer deeds.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does a "trust in riches" tend to undermine character? What are the moral standards of a person who believes that "everybody has his price"? Is idleness any more defensible in a rich person than in a tramp?
2. Would you prefer a town where people own their homes or a town where people rent their dwellings? Which is usually more efficiently conducted, private business or municipal business? Would it make for public welfare if the city parks were sold to private owners? Is property an absolute right? Why does the state have the power to "condemn" private property? Who assumes responsibility for publicly owned property?
3. Land was sold to homesteaders after the Civil War for $1.25 an acre. How much is such land worth now? What did the owners do to be entitled to the increased value? What moral right has a person to money which he inherits? "We fear to

pauperize by giving aid to the poor unless we can provide some form of self-help. But in its treatment of the rich, society is not solicitous. Our provisions for inheritance of property undoubtedly pauperize a certain proportion of those who inherit." Is this comparison sound?

4. What does the word "stewardship" mean? Can we expect people to think of their possessions as a trust conferred by God? If you were to trace the origin of a person's possessions, would you give such a theological explanation? Does the doctrine of stewardship sufficiently recognize the rights of others than the "steward"?
5. Have property rights remained unchanged in human history? Are present regulations entirely satisfactory? What reasons are urged for the "nationalization" of natural resources, like coal, water-power, and the like? Why are navigable rivers not privately owned? Would the traditional doctrine of stewardship help to determine whether natural resources should be privately or publicly owned?
6. What moral value is there in a possession which one has earned? Is a man's income today a reliable measure of the service he has rendered? Would it be morally desirable that this should be so? Will a Christian be willing to receive income without rendering service? How can a person who does not have to work for a living attain a moral right to his income?
7. "Luxury is better than simplicity if it can be the luxury of *all*. If not, it means selfishness, callousness, and broken bands of brotherhood." What restriction on luxury would this ideal impose? Does the statement represent a Christian ideal?
8. What is the moral value of a budget? Do you make a budget? If not, how can you tell whether you are spending your money in ways which your moral judgment approves? What is the moral effect of requiring a wife or a child always to ask for money? Should there be a family budget, with "allowances" for every individual? How would this help develop a sense of responsibility?
9. Which places a person higher in the opinion of other men, his material or his intangible possessions? What is the relation between Christian devotion and intangible possessions?

10. Is it easier to share "spiritual gifts" than it is to share material possessions? Is there any danger of "pauperizing" people with whom we share education, culture, or enthusiasm for high ideals?

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CHAPTER XVI

THE CHRISTIAN AND INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

The limitations of traditional ethical standards.—There have, of course, always been industrial relations. Questions of a fair return for labor and a fair price in the sale of goods arise in all ages. But such questions are quite different in content today from what they were in relatively simple conditions. They are different today in a rural community from what they are in an industrial city like Pittsburgh. Not much definite help can be derived from a study of ancient industrial ethics. The New Testament cannot be expected to yield definite information concerning the moral problems of modern specialized industry. For the most part ancient and medieval conceptions of industrial ethics were based upon the acceptance of a class system. The responsibility for moral regulations was laid on the masters, or the lords of estates. Christianity interpreted this responsibility in terms of paternalism. It was assumed that God had given to the master or the lord the authority which he exercised. God would hold him responsible for the way in which he administered this trust.

The doctrine of stewardship.—The paternalistic system found ethical expression in the doctrine of stewardship. According to this doctrine, whatever authority or privilege one enjoys is derived from God. The king rules by divine right. The master is divinely appointed over the servant. A religious man will

acknowledge the divine source of his privileged position, and will regard himself as a trustee. The ruler in politics and the master in industry are to regard themselves as agents of God and are to exercise their authority in such fashion as to glorify God. The very fact that others are entirely dependent on the good will of the master for their welfare makes it especially imperative that he shall be conscientious. In an autocratic industrial system the doctrine of stewardship means genuine moral restraint.

Our modern industrial system is man-made.—The theological presuppositions of the doctrine of stewardship are nullified by the facts which everyone can see for himself. Modern industry is a human creation. We can name the men who have invented the machines, and perfected the methods of manufacture, and worked out practices of salesmanship. When things go wrong we complain to some human agent rather than to God. We expect wrongs to be righted by human beings. Where industrial conditions remained substantially the same from generation to generation, it was natural to think of them as providentially appointed. A theological doctrine of stewardship was entirely natural. But today, when we are boasting of the power of human endeavor to change the world, a theological doctrine of responsibility is vague and unreal. Instead of piously repeating the text, "The poor ye have always with you," men today are asking why we do not abolish poverty. Instead of permitting owners of wealth to assume that they are especially favored by God, investigators are pointing out the precise ways in which wealth and power come into the hands of individuals. We cannot boast of human

prowess in bringing about material changes without raising the question why human ingenuity does not introduce the moral changes essential to human welfare. The recognition of the fact that we live in a man-made world brings into existence a new kind of ethical inquiry.

The elimination of personal relationships in modern industry.—Before the industrial revolution, industry was carried on for the most part in small establishments where employer and employed knew one another personally and shared the same life. Moreover, when goods were made by hand, it was not a very difficult thing to ascertain approximately what a "fair price" for a commodity was. But the characteristics of modern industry are large-scale production and world-wide markets. The necessary capital for this is secured by inducing many people to invest their savings in return for shares of stock in the enterprise. In a technical sense, the stockholder becomes part-owner of the business. But his investment usually is not made because of any particular personal interest in the enterprise. Almost the sole consideration is the question of profit. It never occurs to the investor to raise the question of stewardship, save as he demands that the managers of the enterprise shall earn good dividends for the investors.

Again, the conduct of modern industry is inevitably placed in the hands of expert managers. The primary duty of the manager is to conduct the business so as to show a profit. And profits are impersonal. They are tabulated by accountants. The business is scrutinized on the basis of financial reports. The human beings in the process are valued in terms of their economic product.

Such impersonal relationships do not stir elemental feelings of obligation. When master-craftsman and apprentices worked at a common task, loyalties and enthusiasms could be developed. But the modern worker feels no enthusiasm for the impersonal industry which employs him as a "hand." Morale can be created under these circumstances only by the deliberate introduction of personal relationships wherever possible, and by the organization of the "rules of the game" so as to make possible a moral respect for the system.

The conditions of business success.—It is, of course, true that permanent business success is based only upon the rendering of actual service to mankind. Significant moral improvements have been made in recent years in the ideals of business. The shifty, irresponsible methods of bargaining so characteristic of the Orient have given way to the "one-price" system, and to the frank and often generous recognition of the primary rights of customers. Extraordinary attention is now being given in some of the foremost business enterprises to the working out of an "organization" in which everyone, from the managers to the humblest employee, shall have a sense of co-operative endeavor. Yet the fact remains that a "good" business must show profits; and the tendency is to rate the excellence of a business in terms of the amount of money profit. The fact that business men are constantly asked for subscriptions to finance worthy charitable and humanitarian enterprises easily fosters the feeling that the man who has made money is perhaps the most useful citizen in the modern world. The presence of a successful factory in a town is taken as prima facie evidence of benefits conferred, without too

much scrutiny of the question whether the factory raises or lowers the moral tone of the place.

The industrial community.—The pre-industrial community was usually a town or village with a long cultural history. Churches were in existence to welcome every new babe and see that he received a religious training. There was a real community life with a long historic background of general interests and culture. The modern industrial community, on the other hand, is brought together for purely economic reasons. A factory or a group of factories is located in some place convenient for manufacturing and trade. In order to be successful, the factory must have an adequate supply of workers. When these come together, they leave behind the old traditions, the familiar churches, and frequently their home life. They find such habitations as are available conveniently near to the factory. Capital often provides nothing but the factory. It frequently assumes no responsibility for the housing or the culture of the workers. The new community has only one common reason for its existence—the economic reason. There is only one natural common topic of conversation —the life in the factory and the factory community. Organizations and movements which promise an improvement of the worker's lot receive a friendly hearing. Labor organizations or socialist societies enlist the devotion which the churches would naturally claim in the older communities. The industrial community tends to become materialistic and shrewd in its ideals. It is class-conscious. The employers and managers usually live by themselves in a different community. There is no common life to be shared by the two communities.

The churches seem to thrive best in regions where the more wealthy live, and it is easily assumed that the churches are more in sympathy with the profit-making aspirations of the wealthy than with the troubles and needs of the workers. The efforts of the churches to "reach the masses" are either ignored or are resented as an evidence of a patronizing spirit. The industrial community thus is a potent source of distrust and cynicism. It constitutes a real moral problem; and the problem is largely due to the fact that these communities are created solely for economic reasons.

The ambitions of wage-earners.—In a broad sense, the modern wage-earner wants an opportunity to have some voice in the industrial enterprise in which he is engaged. The industry in behalf of which he works was located and built without consulting him. If conditions are disagreeable or unsanitary or dangerous, he must perforce put up with them. The amount of wages paid to him is determined by forces out of his control. He observes a sharp contrast between the standards of living enjoyed by the "moneyed class" and those which his own income permits. He wants what is called a "living wage"; by which is meant not simply the larger return in money, but the increased comfort and dignity for himself and family which money can secure. Thus while the immediate objective is higher wages, the ultimate ideal is a higher standard of living made possible by an increased income. In the words of the Reconstruction Program of the American Federation of Labor:

> The workers of the nation demand a living wage for all wage-earners, skilled or unskilled—a wage which will enable the worker

and his family to live in health and comfort, provide a competence for illness and old age, and afford to all the opportunity of cultivating the best that is within mankind.

There is no academic solution of industrial problems.—There is one inexorable condition which imposes itself on all attempts to bring moral improvement into industrial relations. That condition is set by economic necessity. An industrial enterprise has value only as it is a "going concern." It is this fact that makes the moral reform of the industrial system so complicated. An individual may radically change his habits of life without serious impairment of his ability to keep on living. His heart continues to beat, his digestive organs continue to fulfil their function, his brain continues to work. He can make the change because he carries the vital processes over into the new situation unimpaired. But a radical change in industrial habits is quite a different matter. The stupendous difficulty faced by any doctrinaire proposal is the problem of making the change without so dislocating industrial processes as to reduce men to primitive economic conditions while the experiment is being tried. The task of reconstructing industrial practices is like the task of reconstructing a railway terminal in a great city. It would be a comparatively simple proceeding to tear down the old structure and build the new, if that were all that was necessary. The more difficult thing is to keep all trains running, and all passengers accommodated day by day while the reconstruction is going on. In any industrial reform, industry must be kept going, or there will be nothing left to reform.

There is no doctrinaire Christian solution.—The Christian conscience of our day is keenly alive to the

evils of our existing industrial system. But to find the way in which to eliminate them is not so simple. The Christian urges the spirit of brotherhood and good will. But mere generalizations do not go very far. In the impersonal relationships which mark so much of modern industry, how is brotherhood to be practiced? Can one be brother to a corporation or to a share of stock or to a financial report? Yet these are primary realities in our business practice today. Can a successful salesman be a brother? If so, to whom? To the manager who expects him to get results? Or to the people whom he persuades to buy? And just what would brotherliness lead him to do in either case when the quality and the price of what he sells are both fixed by decisions totally out of his control? The Christian perhaps feels that Christianity ought to have a perfect solution for all ills. But the inexorable economic conditions of industry are facts which cannot be reasoned away. Christians are perforce coming to see that the program of industrial reform is a long and complex process. The all-important thing is an unconquerable faith that the human ingenuity which has created the system will also be equal to its modification. But the reform must be a matter of social co-operation, not the application of a doctrinaire program.

What, then, can a Christian do?—The most important contribution which the individual can make is the example of a steadfast conscience willing to pay the price of loyalty to what is required of a Christian. Since the ruling motive in so much industrial and economic thinking is financial profit, the first step in moral improvement is to secure currency for higher motives. If it were known that all true Christians were ready to sub-

ordinate personal economic advantage to other aims, there would be set in motion a social impulse which would do much toward creating the faith that the system itself can be subordinated to moral aims. When once the prevalent habit of measuring success by money standards is challenged, the foundations will be laid for better days. Indeed, we have only to carry over into industry standards already established in other realms. A government official who attempts to use his position to enrich himself is rightly held up to public scorn. Social service, not private gain, is expected of him. The reputation of a minister or a teacher or a physician depends on the service which he renders rather than on the income which he enjoys. The individual Christian in his industrial and commercial relationships can steadfastly set his face in the direction of a reconstruction of ideals of success, and can refuse to permit his own life to be judged by any except the Christian test of service and sympathy.

Are the rules of the game fair?—Adjustments must inevitably be made in terms of the rules which prevail in the system. If it is felt that these regulations are unjust, personal relationships cannot remove the difficulty unless they look toward the alteration of the offending rules. The standards of remuneration for favored officials and agents in an enterprise are often set at what seems to an outsider an absurdly high rate as contrasted with the salaries or wages of the no less essential employee. On the other side, the minute regulations in some of the trade unions are often apparently intended to enhance the power of the union to enforce its will rather than to benefit either the individual workman or the employer or the public. So long as money income or power to extort

financial returns is regarded as the supreme test of success, the rules of the game will be formulated primarily for the purpose of enabling those who make the rules to benefit at the cost of others. The Christian conscience will insist that these rules be scrutinized in the light of moral considerations. The spirit of mutual trust and co-operation is possible only when men are convinced that the rules governing industrial relationships are conceived in the spirit of justice. So rapid has been the development of modern industry that many of the rules are admittedly crude. Some of them preserve from former codes practices which in the new situation are unjustifiable. The Christian cannot acquiesce in any system of regulation which ignores fundamental ideals of justice.

The introduction of more democratic methods of determining the rules of the game.—Many of the occasions of friction and ill-feeling in industry are due to the fact that the workers have had no voice in determining the conditions under which they are required to work. The influence of the old paternalistic ethics is still strong. It is assumed that the "master" has the right and duty of planning and directing, and that the "servant" must always be loyal to what the master has planned. In pursuance of this paternalistic policy, an enterprise is usually so fully organized from above that the employees can gain a hearing only by seeming to obstruct the administration. If the workers feel that they are not receiving their due share of the profits, their usual redress is to protest and to insist on some form of collective bargaining. They are, as a rule, kept in the dark as to the actual financial condition of the enter-

prise. They suspect that huge profits are being made by the managers and stockholders; and they have no way of correcting this impression. In some few instances the managers of a business have adopted the policy of giving to the employees access to the facts, throwing on them partial, and in rare instances the entire, responsibility for determining what a fair distribution of profits would be. It is universally conceded that the loyalty of the employees is indispensable to the success of any business. But it is scarcely possible for one to be loyal to an enterprise in which he feels no personal stake. Loyalty can be expected only as a correlative to a sense of actually sharing in an enterprise. If industry is to develop a morale which can be cordially supported by the Christian conscience, a largely increased democratic participation in the conduct of business enterprise must be worked out. The notable statement of business ethics adopted by a group of British Quaker Employers in 1918 declares that "all matters affecting the workers should be decided in consultation with them, when once they are recognized as members of an all embracing human brotherhood."

A more just distribution of costs and profits.—Increasingly it is coming to be recognized as a sound moral principle that an industry ought to expect to bear the cost of any deleterious by-products. Not only should wages be justly estimated, but provision should be made by which the entire cost of an accident or an illness incurred in service should not be saddled on one family. The business as a whole should assume the risks which inevitably attend the enterprise. Insurance against accident or unemployment is simply the practical

carrying out of the Christian precept that men should bear one another's burdens.

Moreover, if a spirit of co-operation is to be developed, the laborers must have the opportunity to realize some personal stake in the total outcome of the business. Profit-sharing schemes are attempts to furnish this opportunity. The ideal of sharing profits must eventually be enlarged to include the consumers as well as the proprietors and the workers. Christian sentiment strongly reinforces the growing conviction that there can be no permanently satisfactory industrial system which does not frankly recognize that profits must be distributed so as to serve the largest possible social welfare. The precise ways in which this ideal will be worked out must be determined by experiment and study. But the social obligations of industry are becoming more and more evident to thoughtful people.

The ideal of co-operation must displace that of conflict.—Christian ethics calls for the spirit of good will in all relations. Such a spirit may be expected when it is felt that the rules of the game are fair, and that everyone is playing fair. But when it is suspected that any individual or any group of individuals is trying to gain an unfair advantage, the spirit of good will gives way to suspicion and to counter-plotting. The Christian will endeavor to maintain a spirit of good will even under discouraging circumstances. He will never permit distrust and conflict to become chronic conditions. He will use the utmost ingenuity in suggesting methods of procedure which involve good will. But co-operation is realized only when a worthy end is kept in view.

Edward E. Filene has expressed this ideal in the following words:

> Too much thought and planning cannot be given to creating good relations between employer and employee, but in the endeavor to improve these relations the fact should not be lost sight of that such work is not an end in itself, but merely a very important factor among the means for attaining the true aim of business—service to the community.[1]

Protection of the weak against exploitation.—There is always considerable competition for the easy "jobs," which call for no expert skill. It is possible to find many simple-minded people who are willing to work for a small wage. Children especially are tempted by what seems to them to be large pay. Thus, without any intention of personal wrongdoing on the part of the manager of a business, it may come about that women, children, and men "out of a job" are employed at wages which are not sufficient to maintain health and self-respect. Christian sentiment may be counted on to reinforce all movements to eliminate child labor, and to regulate the hours and conditions of work of women. When we realize how important in the spiritual culture of a child is the influence of a good home, we perceive the damage done when the family is disintegrated into a group of wage-earners, with no opportunity for family life. Since efforts to safeguard the welfare of women and children are sure to meet with opposition both from those who are looking for "cheap" labor and from short-sighted and poverty-harassed families, legislation to prevent the exploitation of the weak needs the constant and vigorous support of Christian people.

[1] "A Simple Code of Business Ethics," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1922), p. 226.

The principle of a minimum wage.—The question arises whether any industry has a moral right to exist at the price of keeping in hopeless poverty a portion of those who contribute to it. There is an increasing recognition today of the principle that a morally defensible business must pay its own way. This means that it must pay wages sufficient to enable the workers to live in self-respect. Under present conditions, the rules of the game are such that society enjoys many comforts and conveniences of modern life partly at the expense of workers who receive less than a "living wage." Christian men are coming to see that industry should be so organized as to obviate this compulsory sacrifice on the part of the workers. The statement made by the National Catholic War Council in 1919 declares that "the laborer's right to a decent livelihood is the first moral charge upon industry." The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal church declared for "an equitable wage for laborers, which shall have the right of way over rent, interest, and profits." The Christian ideal of justice cannot be realized unless the welfare of the people engaged in an industry shall be placed above the pecuniary interests of any other group. If this means that consumers must pay larger prices, the answer is that no self-respecting consumer will knowingly ask that prices be kept down at the expense of the physical and cultural degradation of laborers. If it means a reduction of dividends the investors must ask whether they are more concerned with profits than with the people who make profits possible. The minimum wage is simply another aspect of the principle that industry must honestly pay its own costs in such fashion that all concerned may be benefited.

The problem of labor organizations.—Labor organizations owe their existence to the discovery by the laborers that the essentially impersonal methods of modern industry reckon labor as a commodity rather than as the contribution of persons. Against actual and threatened exploitation, laborers banded together so as to demand collectively what would not readily be granted to the individual. The labor movement is a moral endeavor to secure what the laborer believes to be his rights. It requires of the individual worker a remarkable loyalty to the interests of the group, even when such loyalty costs—as is the case in a prolonged strike. Labor demands the right to be heard in the matter of deciding wages and conditions of work. It is hard to see how this demand can be morally condemned. It is an essential element of that program of co-operation which Christian ethics holds before men.

But labor organizations are subject to serious temptations. Ambitious leaders may seek to rise to power through the calling of strikes on petty pretexts. Individual workers then suffer to enhance the reputation of a self-seeking official. Even worse is the indulgence in graft and corruption when an official threatens a strike for the sole purpose of being bribed to prevent it. Honest laborers hotly condemn these crooked practices; but so long as contractors and managers are willing to stoop to bribery, the temptation will continue. It would be well, however, before entering too wholesale a condemnation against labor organizations, to recall the faults of our political history. We do not repudiate democracy simply because it produces a Tammany Hall. Are the shortcomings of the labor movement any more serious

than the defects of popular government in the United States? With an increased democratization of the control of industrial processes, the labor organizations may become more constructive in spirit. In England, where a more generous legal recognition of the organizations has prevailed, the Labour Party has come to feel a gratifying sense of responsibility for the general welfare.

Some moral questions for the individual Christian to face.—Whatever be his position in the industrial system, the individual Christian ought to ask whether the rules of the game which he must play are fair. If he is convinced that they are not, he must do his utmost to secure a consideration of their revision. If he is an employer of labor, he will endeavor so to conduct the industry that the laborers may have the largest possible opportunity to realize a constructive co-operative share in the enterprise. So to organize an industry that it shall be the medium through which all concerned may express the ideal of personal service to humanity is to establish genuine Christian attitudes.

If the Christian is a laborer, he will do his utmost to make his contribution so worthy of moral respect that the rights of labor cannot morally be denied. He will endeavor to make the brotherhood of labor a genuine brotherhood, not merely an association for exerting power to coerce. He will oppose those practices which are wasteful and slovenly. There is no moral triumph in compelling an employer to pay full price for half-hearted or careless work. The Christian will seek to redeem the labor movement from sordidness and unscrupulousness, and to make it a self-respecting moral force

capable of introducing more consideration and mutual trust into industrial relationships.

The Christian as a consumer of goods has a moral responsibility which is too seldom realized. There is always the temptation to seek for bargains without asking how the reduced price is made possible. Many a Christian who is quick to condemn an employer for paying "starvation wages" will at the same time insist on the low prices which require such wages. Shopping is a diversion often carried on without any consideration of the cost involved in catering to the whims of peripatetic buyers. Courtesy is demanded from salesgirls without a sense of responsibility for a corresponding courtesy on the part of the customer. Thoughtlessness and laziness on the part of customers result in the congestion of the few days before Christmas so dreaded by saleswomen in the department stores. There is quite as much lack of social imagination on the part of consumers as on the part of employers or employees—perhaps more, since the consumer is so essential to industry that he seldom is rebuked for his shortcomings.

The impersonal nature of habits of investment has already been discussed. The Christian should realize that his investment helps to maintain the particular industrial or financial enterprise into which it goes. If the matter of income from the investments is the sole consideration, the investor may unwittingly be contributing to some unworthy project. The Christian standard for investment would be an opportunity to share in a real service rendered to humanity. The percentage of income should be secondary to opportunity to share in a worthy enterprise. Least of all should the Christian be

desirous of getting something for nothing. Speculation is inevitably demoralizing.

The demand for a better social order.—The belief in the coming Kingdom of God is fundamental in Christian faith. The early Christians did not hesitate to declare that the existing order would be done away. The ideal of a Christian world was basic in medieval faith. So seriously did men take this ideal that the church undertook to direct civilization. The modern world has repudiated this conception of church control; but Christians have never abandoned their belief that there may be established a social order in which good will and co-operation shall prevail.

In so far as the existing order presupposes and capitalizes un-Christian motives, the Christian is under obligation to protest. Such protests will often be suspected and denounced. Christians who suggest new forms of industrial or political organization will be branded as dangerous "radicals." If a Christian is convinced that some radical reorganization of industrial life would actually bring about better human relations, he has the right and the duty to attempt to convince others. But the limitations of any purely doctrinaire proposal must be clearly recognized. The truly thoughtful Christian will usually be more concerned with definite and practicable improvements in existing conditions than with the agreeable, but somewhat fruitless, proclamation of large generalizations which are likely for some time to remain in the realm of theory. At the same time the Christian spirit will welcome all idealism in so far as it serves to create in men the confidence that the evils in our man-made system of industry may be eliminated

by human effort, if only men care enough about human welfare to seek to secure the conditions which will enable men to live at their best. Faith in the Kingdom of God—a righteous social order—is an inalienable element in Christian living.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. To what extent can the rules of ancient industry guide us today? Would a study of the Bible enable you to discover whether labor unions are to be encouraged or discouraged?
2. Define "paternalism." Compare the duty of a master to a slave with the duty of an employer to an employee. Could a slave demand a contract from his master? Could he stipulate his hours of labor? Compare the work of a house servant with the work of a factory girl. In which occupation is there more paternalism? What characteristics does a housewife usually have in mind when she wants a "good servant"? "We have not realized that labor dissatisfaction with an autocratic control is the kind of dissatisfaction that we held as religious when it was directed against political oppression in a Prussian type of government." Do you agree with this statement? Why do workingmen object to "benevolent paternalism"?
3. What is meant by the phrase "providential order"? Was slavery believed by southerners before the Civil War to be providentially ordained? What is your opinion on this point? Why has poverty usually been regarded as a part of a providential dispensation? Do modern idealists believe that poverty is an inevitable aspect of human society? How does our knowledge of the part which human ingenuity has had in creating the present industrial order affect our sense of responsibility for that order?
4. "The old honesty could assume that goods belonged to their makers and could then discuss exchanges and contracts. The new honesty will first have to face a prior question, namely, who owns what is collectively produced, and are the present rules of the game distributing the returns honestly and fairly?"

Is it easy to determine ownership in modern industry? For example, just what moral responsibility does the owner of a share in the United States Steel Corporation feel? Just what does he own?

5. When men speak of a "good" business what do they mean? Is a "good" business necessarily morally good? Is a "good" salesman primarily concerned with the welfare of those to whom he makes a sale? How would you distinguish between "profit" and "profiteering"? Is profiteering "good business"?
6. Compare a village or town more than a century old with a newly built industrial community. Which is the more attractive to live in? Where would you find more churches? Why? Where would you find more culture interests? Why? What common interests have people in an industrial community? Why do radical social theories find so ready a hearing in such communities?
7. It is frequently said that a laborer is entitled to a living wage. How would you determine what a living wage is? Why does a laborer want more wages? Are his reasons morally defensible? Are they morally different from the reasons why an investor wants good returns? Has a workingman as much moral right to own an automobile as a business man has? "The labor movement means more than better wages and shorter hours for individual workingmen. It involves the struggle for a different status for their entire class." Do you think that laborers have an inferior status in society?
8. Suppose socialism to be a better industrial system than the present one, would it be a simple matter to introduce it? What have been the effects of a radical change of industrial organization in Russia? What is a "doctrinaire" theory?
9. Is there a distinctively "Christian" pattern for the industrial order? Are Christian people agreed as to what reforms in our industrial system should be urged? Why cannot the church immediately right industrial wrongs?
10. Compare the scale of income of an official in an industry with that of an employee. Are the differences which you find morally defensible? Who determines the salary scale?

It is considered proper for a corporation to employ a lawyer to promote industrial interests. Some industries refuse to recognize a paid agent of a labor union. Is there moral difference between the two cases?

11. What is meant by the democratic management of an industry? Why is such management demanded by laborers? Can fair rules be established unless all parties concerned be consulted? Can loyalty to an industry be expected if the workers are kept in ignorance of the problems and difficulties which the management must face?

12. Who pays the cost of production in an industry employing children at low wages? If a man is injured or killed while working in a mill who ought to bear the loss? Has a seasonal industry responsibility for the workers during the slack season? What is profit-sharing? Ought workers as well as investors to have an opportunity to share in the profits of a business?

13. Children often want to leave school and go to work. Should they be allowed to do so? If not, why not? Define the phrase "minimum wage"? Why should people not be left free to work for as little as they are willing to take? Is there any difference between the work which a child does with his parents in the home or on the farm and the labor of a child in a factory? "For a society pretending to be moral to permit little children to be used up and stunted under any plea of cheaper production or support of parents is not above the moral level of those peoples which practice infanticide to prevent economic stress."

14. What is collective bargaining? Why can a labor union make a better bargain than an individual worker? Compare the ethics of a shareholder demanding large dividends with the ethics of a laborer demanding large wages. Do you think that the "politics" in the labor movement are morally worse than the "politics" of your own city government? What attitude ought a Christian to take toward labor unions?

15. Certain stores have as a motto for their sales persons, "the customer is always right." Do you think the customer is as

conscientious as the store management? Do you ever hunt bargains? How does bargain-hunting differ from profiteering?

16. Can one who believes in the Kingdom of God be satisfied with the present social order? What part did Christianity have in doing away with slavery? What part has Christianity had in abolishing the saloon in America? Do you think that Christian idealism can effect improvements in our industrial system?

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CHAPTER XVII

THE CHRISTIAN AND POLITICS

The relationship of early Christianity to politics.—It was dangerous for a Christian in the early days to be suspected of having any active hand in politics. The Roman government had had sufficient experience with Jewish insubordination to be distrustful of any movement arising in Palestine. The Christians had to take great pains to prove that they were not a bad influence in the politics of their day. They were living in daily expectation of the return of Christ to earth to destroy the existing powers and to set up the Kingdom of God. It would be vain to expect any all-embracing doctrine of political ethics from this early period. The New Testament is concerned with the inner religious life of the individual rather than with the social and political order.

The political theory of the medieval church.—After the conversion of Constantine, official relations were established between the church and the Roman Empire. As the power of the Empire declined, the Catholic church assumed larger and larger importance as the guardian of the social order. The church herself became a political power. She promulgated laws. She maintained armies, and entered into warfare with other political powers. She attempted to insist on certain definite relationships between herself and the rulers of Europe. The medieval church was very much in politics.

In the background of all thinking concerning political duty lay a distinct theological conception of the nature

of the state. It was believed that political government was ordained by God for the express purpose of restraining evil. Obedience to the ruler was required as a part of obedience to God. Under this conception, the duty of the ordinary Christian was simple. He was to be obedient to the existing government. He had no part in the making of that government. That was the business of the ruler, who was responsible to God for the way in which he administered the trust divinely committed to him. The subjects had simply to obey the ruler.

The relationship of church and state.—The church also was believed to be a divinely established institution. The Christian must be obedient to the church, exactly as he must be obedient to the state, and for the same reason, viz., because it was divinely established. The church had jurisdiction over the spiritual interests of men, while the state looked after his temporal interests. Theoretically there was a clear division between these two realms, so that church and state need not clash. But a temporal ruler might conceivably command his subjects to do something that would injure or destroy their chance for salvation. In such a case, since the eternal welfare of men is more important than their temporal comfort, the requirements of the church should take precedence.

The new freedom introduced by the Reformation.—The Reformation destroyed that church control of politics which had been attempted and often carried out during the Middle Ages. This left the ruler more absolute than ever in his realm. A divided Christendom could no longer dictate a universal political policy. The growing ambitions of the nations of Europe were

able to make good use of this release from ecclesiastical pressure. The era of royal absolutism thus arose. Christians must still obey the political ruler; but they began to dare to defy a church which attempted to coerce conscience.

The rights of dissenters.—A new feature was introduced when the attempt was made to inforce uniformity in religion within a nation. The dissenters felt that obedience to God required them to maintain their form of worship even though the state had forbidden it. Religious loyalty was thus enlisted in defiance of political authority just as religious loyalty in the early days of the Reformation was enlisted in defiance of ecclesiastical authority. The dissenting religious communities demanded liberty of prophesying (freedom of speech) and freedom of worship (right of free assembly). These demands were later widened to include the rights of men in general as over against a government inclined to be tyrannical.

The development of modern democratic ideals.—In most cases modern governments rest on a revolution against the tyranny of a ruler. But revolution, judged by the medieval standards, meant disobedience against the ruler. Modern democracies exalt an independent attitude which the traditional tenets of Christian theology condemned. It is not to be wondered at that Christian ethics is somewhat uncertain today in its interpretation of political duty.

The modern state is utilitarian.—The theological theory of the origin and justification of political government is almost unknown today, save as ecclesiastical tradition keeps it alive. The Constitution of the

United States begins with the words: "We the people of the United States, in order to" secure certain specified ends, "do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The constitution is a human creation, designed to further humanly defined ends. Government is an instrument to be used by men, rather than a non-human authority to which one must submit for theological reasons. Such a government must deal with all men alike. It cannot recognize one form of religion in preference to others. Its duty is to secure justice for all citizens regardless of differences of religious belief.

Religious sentiment has not yet adjusted itself to this change in the philosophy of government. Christians have yet to face squarely the fact that the modern state is not and cannot be expected to be "Christian." It may even become anti-Christian, as occurred in France during the Revolution, and as has occurred in Russia under bolshevism.

The modern man is a citizen, not a subject.—The very vocabulary of traditional political ethics is fast vanishing. The terms "ruler" and "subject" are disappearing.[1] The highest official in a modern democracy is an executive, not a "ruler." Whatever authority he possesses is given to him by the people who elect him. They can dismiss him at any election if they are not satisfied with the way in which he fulfils his trust. The medieval theory is today precisely reversed. The

[1] It gives a sense of unreality to the discussion when the old vocabulary is used in connection with our American life. A recent Roman Catholic manual of ethics calls the president of the United States a "ruler" who has the divine right to expect "obedience" from the citizens of the country. See O. A. Hill, *Ethics General and Special*, p. 379.

sovereign citizens command. The officials of the government must obey. We expect government to be the instrument of our desires. The ethics of autocracy is totally inadequate to the new situation. Yet traditional Christian conceptions of political duty are largely influenced by the older theological theory.

The moral significance of the state.—One who has been accustomed to the advantages enjoyed under a well-organized and well-administered government gains a vivid realization of the moral significance of these advantages if he has occasion to travel or to engage in business in a land with an inefficient or corrupt government. If there were not some organization, representing the interests of all the people in a country, sectional rivalries, class interests, competing industrial enterprises, and a thousand and one inevitable clashing activities would be in a constant state of friction. We depend upon the state to keep the peace among citizens, and to legislate for the welfare of all. The state is thus an indispensable instrument in securing the kind of social life which Christianity believes to be desirable. There is every reason why Christians should desire strong and efficient government.

The duty of the Christian citizen.—The moral advantages of a rightly ordered political government are so obvious that the Christian will be an eager supporter of all worthy political institutions. The instinct of Christianity from the first has been sound. The state exists to secure the rights of all. Reverence for this end is the privilege and the duty of every right-minded man. Christians ought to be loyal citizens, just because they appreciate the moral significance of the state.

The moral weakness of the utilitarian state.—It is quite possible for men of low moral standards to think of the state as a tool for securing what they desire. Strong pressure is brought to bear on legislative bodies to enact laws benefiting "special interests." If laws are enacted which are felt to represent the desires of one group and to ignore or thwart the desires of another equally important group, the latter group is likely to seek to evade or to nullify the objectionable legislation. The consciousness of the modern citizen that he is sovereign, while the government is subject to his approval for its support, makes disrespect for law very easy. There is real danger that the state may fail to win respect just because the exercise of popular sovereignty may be practiced without any adequate moral education of citizens in the meaning of politics. Such a moral education is the most important task for a democracy to undertake.

Education for citizenship.—The moral duty of a citizen is different from the moral duty of a "subject." The citizen has a creative share in political affairs which the subject does not enjoy. The duty of respect for law, which was inculcated in the morality of subjects, must be supplemented by the duty of striving to secure good laws. The capacity to understand public affairs to some extent, the ability to judge whether a given policy is good or not, the willingness to act in accordance with "public spirit," rather than in accordance with private interest—such are some of the moral requirements of a citizen. The modern Christian should be a good citizen. His religious education should include training in the foregoing activities. A part of the time spent in

a vague study of the vicissitudes of the kings of Israel might well be spent in gaining an acquaintance with the political problems and issues of our own day. There is a largely undeveloped field here for adult classes in our Sunday schools.

While the modern state cannot be "Christian" in the sense that it will extend special favors to that form of religion, it can embody the spirit of justice and service which is part and parcel of the Christian attitude. Christian citizenship is not religious partisanship. It is simply the carrying-over into the political realm of the spirit of good will. Thus Christianity has much to contribute to the modern state. It can discourage and rebuke efforts to make the government a tool of special interests at the expense of the public welfare.

There are no ready-made "Christian" policies.—Our age is witnessing the breakdown of former attempts to incorporate into the law of the land distinctively Christian regulations. Until Christian leaders become more concerned for universally valid principles than for the maintenance of distinctively ecclesiastical standards, the Christian spirit will not have a full opportunity to make its contribution. Christians, like all citizens, must be willing to learn, must be ready to make experiments which promise well, must be capable of revising and readjusting traditional ideals whenever the facts warrant. The historical understanding of Christianity will prepare Christian citizens to carry the spirit of inquiry rather than the spirit of dogmatism into their political relationships.

Is patriotism a Christian duty?—When the state is reasonably well fulfilling its function of securing a

régime of justice, all good citizens will gratefully acknowledge the benefits thus achieved, and will loyally support the state. But what if the state has become an instrument of evil-minded men? What if it is engaged in fostering justice and distrust instead of promoting good will? Christian leaders have usually urged patriotism as a general duty. But there has nearly always been the express recognition that if loyalty to the state involves disloyalty to Christ, the Christian may not hesitate. He must be loyal to Christ at all costs. The dissenters in England insisted on their religious rights even at the cost of disobedience to the state. In the history of the United States, when the government seemed to be distinctly on the side of slavery, ardent Christians gave voice to utterances which conventional defenders of law and order regarded as disloyal. In times of war, there have always been "conscientious objectors" who could not reconcile the deeds and thoughts of war with the spirit of Jesus. A little reflection will show that it is as impossible to turn patriotism into an abstract dogmatism as it is to turn religious loyalty into dogmatism, without losing its moral significance. The state cannot morally demand complete loyalty unless it fulfils the moral conditions under which loyalty can be gladly given by right-minded men. There have been justifiable revolutions in history. But revolutionists are "disloyal" to the government which they seek to overthrow.

Yet in spite of all its imperfections, the state is usually the best means which we know of establishing a régime under which mutual trust and co-operation become possible. Even a weak state is better than none. In patriotism men usually are voicing loyalty to an ideal

state. They have in mind the perfection they would like to see their nation attain. Patriotism is perhaps the most effective means of arousing in men a *moral* devotion to the state. Without it, it is difficult to see how the spirit of common good will could be aroused throughout a nation. The Christian will always want to be patriotic. It is only when patriotism is being enlisted in the support of something which he believes to be unworthy of his country that he will be constrained to pause and ask himself serious questions.

The problem of war.—War involves actions and attitudes which are totally opposed to the spirit of Jesus. In war one must lie and hate and kill. The moral disaster of war can scarcely be exaggerated. Every great war is followed by a period of moral laxity. Men cannot be taught to hate and lie and use violence without incalculable moral damage. "The argument that war is necessary to prevent moral degeneration of individuals may, under present conditions, where every day brings its fresh challenge to civic initiative, courage, and vigor, be dismissed as unmitigated nonsense."[1] Not only Christians, but nearly all thoughtful men, deplore war. It is a part of any sane morality to attempt to eliminate this curse.

War is a problem of social rather than individual ethics.—The conscientious objector finds a personal solution of the problem of war. He simply refuses to participate in this admittedly wicked procedure. He takes whatever punishment his government may see fit to impose on him for his refusal; but he resolutely keeps himself clear from any complicity in this colossal

[1] Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 482.

sin of mankind. The heroism of such Christian loyalty should be frankly recognized. These objectors suffer from the fact that they are classed with people who want to evade war purely from cowardice or from selfish reasons. It takes more moral courage for a fine-minded man to face opprobrium than it does for a coarse-minded bully to enlist in a fight amid the plaudits of emotional throngs.

Nevertheless, this purely individual moral decision does not reach very far. When war is once declared, it is too late to deal with it in any reasonable way. The all-important moral problem is to prevent the declaration of war. So long as war is averted, reason and argument and adjustment are possible. When war is once declared men are perforce committed to unreasonable conduct. There can be no ideally consistent moral behavior *after* war is declared. One can only make the best of a bad situation. The individual is placed where he must save his honor as best he may. And for most people it seems more honorable to stand by one's country in time of need than to forsake it.

The need of a moral method of deciding controversies.—The great moral defect of war is that it gives the decision to the side with the greatest military power and skill. To suppose that "God is on the side of the greatest battalions" means to deny moral character to God. War is no guaranty that a decision will be morally right. It simply determines which side possesses the greater physical force.

But if there is no other available means of deciding questions war is inevitable. In the realm of smaller social units, methods have been devised which should

do away with unnecessary violence. Increasingly it has become possible for men to appeal to some impartial tribunal when they could not agree between themselves. Dueling has almost entirely disappeared from civilized lands. Clan feuds have been superseded by more inclusive loyalties as legal methods have been accepted in the place of private violence. The next step in the evolution of peace is the development of judicial agencies to which disputed questions may be referred. Christian sentiment is strongly supporting endeavors of this kind. A world-court, a league of nations, a system of arbitration treaties, are some of the promising experiments in the direction of larger co-operation.

The development of an international mind.—The Christian, believing as he does in the supreme importance of the exercise of good will, welcomes the contribution which the state makes. But when the policy of the state is so interpreted as to lead to conflict rather than co-operation, the Christian is compelled to raise critical questions. The Christian will want his country so to act as to make co-operation and good will more practicable. He will be more eager for attempts at international co-operation than he will be for preparedness to invoke the ordeal of battle at any provocation. The Christian cannot consent to any interpretation of national sovereignty which would imply an unwillingness to submit national interests to moral examination. Just as no individual can morally be permitted to be the sole judge in a controversy where others are involved, so no nation has the moral right to exercise "sovereignty" in disregard of the claims of other nations. Next to the worship of mammon the unrestrained worship of country is

perhaps the most dangerous modern idolatry. The Christian may not forget that lesson so often ignored—that God is not the God of any one people to the exclusion of others. No greater service can be rendered in these days than the cultivation of a Christian attitude toward other peoples. This means the constant insistence that it is more important for our country to seek the way of justice than it is for it to attain dominion at the expense of justice.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Were the early Christians patriotic? What difference do you see between the relation of an early Christian to his government and your relation to your government? Could we learn from the New Testament what are the duties of a Christian citizen of the United States?
2. What was the doctrine of the "divine right" of rulers? Was it a Christian doctrine? Who makes the laws in an autocracy? Was the medieval ruler an autocrat? What was the duty of a subject in an autocracy?
3. What was the scope of the temporal ruler, according to the medieval theory? What was the scope of the church? Did the church and the state ever clash? Why was the state expected to punish heretics? Which was more important in the Middle Ages, the church or a national government? Which is more important in America?
4. What rights did dissenters claim? Were these rights recognized in medieval politics? If the dissenters won their point, how could heresy be punished? Does the modern state punish heretics? How did the dissenters help to establish political democracy?
5. What part has revolution played in the establishment of modern democracies? Do Americans approve the revolution of 1776? Why?
6. Why can the United States not officially establish any specific religion? Is it correct to call the United States a "Christian nation"?

7. What is the difference between the attitude of a "subject" toward his "ruler" and the attitude of a "citizen" toward the chief executive in a democracy? To whom is an elected official responsible?
8. The traditional theological conception of the state asserted that its function was to restrain evildoers. Does this seem to you an adequate definition? "The best government is one which governs least." Do you agree? Name some ways in which you depend upon the state to secure your rights?
9. Does popular government mean that the state is merely a tool of the citizens? How does "special legislation" lower political ideals? What is "log-rolling" in legislation? Ought a citizen to obey a law which he does not approve? If so, why?
10. Why is education more necessary for a "citizen" than it is for a "subject"? What are the essentials of such education? Did your religious training include emphasis on these essentials? What is "public spirit"? What did Christian churches do to arouse public spirit during the war? Is public spirit equally important in times of peace?
11. "My country! May she ever be in the right. But right or wrong, my country." Is this the best expression of patriotism? Were the dissenters in England patriotic? The attitude of radical abolitionists is sometimes compared with the refusal of men today to respect the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Are the two cases parallel? Why does a "conscientious objector" refuse to support the government in war? Are his reasons good ones? How does patriotism help to elevate political ideals?
12. "War is the most colossal and ruinous social sin that afflicts mankind today. It is utterly and irremediably un-Christian." Do Christians generally pass this judgment on war? What is the effect of war on public morals? Can any individual stop war? Which is easier, to prevent a war from starting, or to stop it after it has started?
13. Would it be as "honorable" to submit international disputes to a tribunal of justice as to appeal to war? Ought Christian sentiment to support a world-court? What is meant by an "international mind"? Why must the Christian try to think in terms of international interests?

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE ENLARGING SCOPE OF CHRISTIAN IDEALISM

The obligations imposed by social relationships.—The sense of obligation arises largely out of our relationships with other people. A person's sense of moral obligation is likely to be very strong in the realm of close personal relationships, and relatively weak in realms where no such actual contacts exist. Our practical codes of morals are almost inevitably developed piecemeal. Even when some theoretical unification of the different realms of duty has been worked out, one's practical conduct is still influenced by the particular loyalties which pull upon the affections. There remain certain prejudices even in the best of men.

The Christian faces diverse obligations.—The Christian, like everyone else, lives and thinks in terms of practical loyalties, whose power he cannot escape. But the demands thus made do not always harmonize, nor do they always seem consistent with what the Christian has learned from his religious teachers. A conspicuous example of such maladjustment at the present day is the problem of war. The deeds which are essential to the winning of a war are utterly abhorrent to the normal Christian conscience. Yet in time of war most Christians are constrained to participate in what they abhor. What is true of war is true in lesser degree in other relationships. The exigencies of industrial success often require acts and attitudes which one would not approve

in private relationships. Physicians, lawyers, teachers, and even ministers sometimes face situations where professional ethics requires one kind of conduct while personal affection or Christian love would suggest a different course. There was a long period in which the alleged Christian obligation to punish heretics was in conflict with more humane sentiments. It ought not to surprise or dismay the Christian if he finds that his moral convictions are not always consistent with one another. Perhaps the inescapable influence of complex and often conflicting moral demands keeps morality from becoming stereotyped and formal.

The Christian ideal of perfection.—The loftiness of Christian idealism has frequently been expressed in some doctrine of moral perfection. It was felt that the superiority of Christianity to any other form of idealism should mean the defense of Christianity as an absolutely perfect system of ethics. The individual Christian was likewise expected to lead a sinless life. Such an ideal demands rare devotion, and has been effectively taught by some of the most saintly Christian leaders. But it usually leads to difficulties. Either the path of perfection is artificially simplified, as in asceticism, by deliberately avoiding some of the contacts which normally occur in social life; or the Christian who attempts to keep his conscience clean is in constant distress, and is likely to be compelled to give more attention to purification from sins than to constructive moral planning. Christians have usually found it necessary to adopt some less rigorous conception of morality.

The moral problem of compromise.—The word "compromise" has an evil moral repute. It suggests

that the one who makes the compromise is less conscientious than is the person who refuses to budge. But some sort of give and take is often essential if people are to get along together at all. To refuse ever to compromise would mean the obstinate refusal to take the point of view of the other fellow. Such obstinacy is no more defensible in a Christian than in anyone else. Since we develop our loyalties in relation to diverse groups and occupations, one of the primary moral tasks is to correlate these loyalties so that we may pass from one to the other without moral disaster. The progress of moral ideals and practices is largely due to the modifications and adjustments made necessary by conflicting interests. Narrow group loyalties, like family feuds, are eventually eliminated by the demands of a more inclusive social order. Religious bigotry is ultimately condemned for humanitarian reasons. Class prejudice is compelled to reckon with the rights of society as a whole. National ambitions are eventually required to find their place in a world where nations must co-operate if they are not all to be destroyed. Industry and commerce are constantly being criticized and modified at the behest of non-industrial ideals. It might almost be said that the man who is willing to compromise, in the sense that he is always willing to discuss matters and to try to find out what is fair to all parties concerned, is more wisely moral than is the man who stubbornly insists that his code must prevail unimpaired. Only by such open-minded consideration of issues can morality be kept from narrowness.

It is peculiarly important for the Christian to bear in mind this ever present necessity for considering new

adjustments. Christian ideals are usually presented in the form of absolutely perfect precepts. Any sort of compromise is represented as a species of disloyalty. The Christian ideal is usually contrasted with other ideals in such fashion as to indicate the inferiority of all non-Christian practices. But such presentations are likely to overlook the fact that existing Christian standards are the outcome of historical development, and are themselves the results of adjustment to definite historical situations. It cannot always be assumed that a traditional interpretation should have the right of way. One of the truest marks of Christian love is the ability to look at matters through the eyes of the other fellow. When this is done, morality requires that the other fellow's interests shall be given due weight. The Christian is to love his neighbor as himself. Such love would insist on permitting the neighbor's interests and preferences to have as primary right as one's own preferences in determining a decision. The Christian ideal thus implies a constantly enlarging realm of moral considerations as the circle of "neighbors" increases.

Historical adjustments of Christian ideals.—It helps the modern Christian to understand the complicated problem which he faces, if he knows something of the history of Christianity. We can point to many instances in the past when Christians were facing a conflict due to the pressure of different loyalties. The first Christians attempted to keep themselves unspotted from the world. But they had family ties, business connections, and political relationships. The early centuries of our era were called by Harnack the period of the "Hellenization" of Christianity. He regarded the compromises which

were made as a degeneration of true Christianity; and he sought to recall Christian devotion to the primitive standards alleged to exist before this degeneration took place. This movement, however, was one in which there were gains as well as losses. The adoption of Hellenistic ideals meant the enrichment of Christian thinking in some directions as truly as it meant the loss of the peculiarly Jewish traits which marked the early stages of the movement. We may very properly speak of the process as the Christianizing of Hellenic culture rather than as the Hellenizing of Christianity. The all-important thing to remember is that the process involved a compromise, in the good sense of the term. The rights of non-Christian ways of thinking were eventually recognized and a way was found by which "Christian" thinking could include what was good in the new as well as what was good in the old.

All through history a similar process has been going on. We can recognize the adjustments which have been made in the past, and can rejoice in the breadth of vision which made it possible for Christianity to keep pace with growing culture. We need to carry over into our present life the ideal of an enlarging ethics in order to attain a sane, constructive view of our modern complex problems.

The growth of Christian ideals.—It is difficult to designate any particular program of growth to which all persons must conform. But a Christian attempts to organize his life around the center of a whole-souled personal consecration to Jesus Christ. In such dedication he experiences a high moral idealism. The affections are set entirely on the things which please God. The

supreme aim of a Christian will be to carry this attitude of absolute loyalty to the way of life revealed by Jesus into all realms of activity. But the moment he passes from a general attitude of devotion to a specific question of behavior in definite situations, he confronts many a problem of adjustment. If he is not prepared to face these in the spirit indicated above, he will be constantly embarrassed by the seeming inevitability of lapses from a "perfect" Christian loyalty. But if he understands that the very nature of moral living is the facing of conflicting interests and the education of moral judgment through the weighing of conflicting claims, he will view the experiences of adjustment as occasions for the progressive Christianizing of his life in all its varied relationships. There will, of course, be experimental adjustments; but if these are known to be experiments, one can learn from failures as well as from successes how to make more satisfactory adjustments the next time. The triumph of Christian idealism is found in the persistent attempt to bring all loyalties into harmony with the central loyalty to Jesus' way of living, rather than the refusal to permit so-called secular interests to have a hearing.

The Christianizing of personal habits.—The most immediate responsibility of any person is the control of his own habits. Christian ethics addresses itself to this task in its many warnings against the lure of self-indulgence, and its many exhortations to attitudes of truthfulness, generosity, service, and the like. Consecration means the dedication of all one's faculties to the service of Christ. But everyone knows what a struggle it requires to bring into daily habits such attitudes as are

compatible with Christian devotion. Our bodily and mental activities are stimulated primarily by the environment in which Christians and non-Christians alike live. Standards of behavior are shaped largely by the nature of this environment. Human beings must eat in order to live. Christian dedication does not supply the motive for eating. But the Christian will be disturbed if he finds that his habits of eating are incompatible with his finer ideals. Gluttony comes to be condemned. The Christianizing of the bodily appetites means eventually the attainment of such a control as will enable the Christian to eat without ceasing to be Christian in his attitudes. Other physical appetites have a natural source and prescribe their own ends. Any explanation of them must be made in terms of the physical processes which stimulate activity. The Christian endeavors to regulate the appetites so that their rightful satisfaction may be compatible with Christian ideals. Some sort of "compromise" between pure spirituality and pure physical indulgence is eventually reached, which permits the Christian to feel that his physical activities (which have their own independent rights) are contributing to a unified expression of his personality. Bodily health is a good thing in itself; but it is a better thing if it is also a means of making a larger contribution to the Kingdom of God.

Evangelism and missions.—One of the first impulses of the Christian who has experienced the joy of a genuine Christian consecration is to persuade others to enter into the same experience. This, again, is a specific expression of a natural impulse which urges us to share with others any enjoyable experience. The Christian is urged to "win souls for Christ" as the primary expression of his

consecration. In evangelism there is the Christianizing of a natural social impulse. But evangelism brings its problems. The personal honesty of those whom one seeks to "convert" must be respected. The Christian life must be so presented as to be actually practicable; otherwise there will be disillusionment and "backsliding." Evangelism is thus led perforce to consider the various realms in which the convert must live and to suggest ways of living which will secure the continuance of Christian idealism throughout the shifts which the Christian must make from one situation to another.

Missionary activity is the extension of evangelism to peoples whose traditions are non-Christian. Here again the Christian is engaged in an activity which may be found elsewhere. Other religions have their missionaries. The Christian is endeavoring to establish some kind of contact which shall be dominated by Christian motives. But the missionary is compelled to face serious problems of compromise. The story of the "Hellenizing" of Christianity in the early centuries finds its counterpart today as the Christian missionary tries to speak and to live in a new culture. Converts from non-Christian peoples are increasingly demanding the right to think out Christianity in terms of their own culture. It is probable that exactly as the historian now recognizes "Jewish Christianity," "Greek Christianity," "Latin Christianity," or "Anglican Christianity," so we shall soon recognize "Chinese Christianity," "Japanese Christianity," and other types as a result of modern missionary work.

The Christianizing of the social order.—The institutions of industry and politics have grown up in response

to natural aspirations and needs. They have developed their own laws. It is to be expected and desired that the fundamental rules in industry and politics should be developed by actual experience instead of being imposed from without. It is here that there is a very prevalent misunderstanding on the part of doctrinaire Christians. It is not infrequently assumed that the Christian church is capable of telling business men how business should be run "on Christian principles." The truth of the matter is that business must be run on business principles, or it will soon run into disaster. The Christianizing of the social order is no simple matter. It will be gradually brought about as Christian men discover ways in which business and other enterprises may be successfully conducted in such fashion that a man may maintain in these an attitude compatible with that which he professes as a Christian. Protests arising out of the discovery of inhuman consequences of existing industrial customs will stimulate conscientious men to re-examine their habits, and to consider means of relieving the situation. Large-minded Christian leaders in the industrial world will initiate experiments looking to a better régime. Christian people will insist that some way be found in which participation in industrial or commercial enterprises may be compatible with the spirit of good will toward all men. The problems of politics will be met in the same way. War as the supreme resort of men in cases of conflict of opinion is already generally condemned by Christians. There is arising a vehement insistence that other ways of determining issues shall be adopted, so that Christian citizens shall not be compelled, as many now are compelled, to ask whether one can be

a loyal patriot and a loyal Christian at the same time.

The adventure of Christian faith.—The Christian life is a spiritual adventure rather than a cut-and-dried system. The Christian has found the supreme meaning of life in his belief that God loves men and invites them to share that love. This faith finds its concrete expression in Jesus, who reveals the full meaning of a life completely shared with God. The Christian is eager to discover ways in which this shared life may be realized in the modern world. He begins with his own affections and aspirations. He brings his physical impulses into co-ordination with his Christian ideals. He reaches out to adjust his social relations with the demands of the ideal of the Kingdom. He is willing if necessary to pay the price of isolation because of loyalty to the Kingdom; but he finds his greatest triumph in the discovery of ways in which he can share the Kingdom life with all men. He is always distressed if he must alienate them in order to be true to the Kingdom. To create and maintain a fellowship of all men in the spirit of good will is the goal toward which the Christian strives.

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